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# Two Poems

By D. H. Lawrence

## Twilight

UNDER the blue-grey twilight, heaped
Beyond the withering snow of the shorn fields,
A rubble of stunted houses stands unreaped
Of the long scythe the stooping mower wields.

And lamps like venturous glow-worms steal among
The shadowy stubble of the under-dusk,
And silence issues slowly from the husk
As further off the scythe of night is swung.

And all the town is gone into a dust
Of blueness mingled with a fume of gold,
And pale, hot skies have darkened and gone cold,
And all the flowers are fallen in disgust.

But I remember still the sunny hours
Of queens in hyacinth 'neath skies of gold,
And morning singing where the woods were scrolled
And diapered above the chaunting flowers.

The darkness steals the forms of all the queens,
But oh, the palms of his black hands are red
Inflamed with binding up the sheaves of dead
Hours that were once all glory and all queens.

## Meeting among the Mountains

THE little pansies by the road have turned
Away their purple faces and their gold,
And evening has taken all the bees from the thyme,
And all the scent is shed away by the cold.

Against the hard and pale blue evening sky
The mountain's new-dropped summer snow is clear
Glistening in steadfast stillness: clear
Like clean pain sending even a chill down here.

Christ on the Cross!—his beautiful young man's body
Has fallen dead upon the nails, and hangs
White and loose at last, with all the pain
Drawn on his mouth, eyes broken at last by his pangs.

And slowly down the mountain road, a belated
Bullock-wagon comes; so I am ashamed
To gaze any more at the Christ, whom the mountain snows
Whitely confront; I wait on the grass, as maimed.

The breath of the bullock stains the hard, chill air,
The band is across its brow, and it scarcely seems
To draw the load, so still and slow it moves,
While the driver sits crouched upon the shaft, and dreams.

Surely about his sun-burnt face is something
That vexes me with wonder. He sits so still
Here among all this silence, crouching forward,
Dreaming and letting the bullock take its will.

I stand aside on the grass to let them go
—And Christ, I have met his awful eyes again,
The brown eyes black with misery and hate that look
Full in my own, and the torment starts again.

One moment the hate leaps at me standing there,
One moment I see the stillness of agony,
Something frozen in the silence that dare not be
Loosed, one moment the darkness frightens me.

## MEETING AMONG THE MOUNTAINS

Then among the averted pansies, beneath the high
White peaks of snow, at the foot of the sunken Christ
I stand in a chill of anguish, trying to say
The joy I bought was not too highly priced.

But he has gone, motionless, hating me
Living as the mountains do, because they are strong.
With a pale, dead Christ on the crucifix of his heart,
And breathing the frozen memory of his wrong.

Still in his nostrils, the frozen breath of despair,
And heart like a cross that bears dead agony
Of love, clenched in his fists the shame, and in
His belly the smouldering hate of me.

And I, as I stand in the cold, averted flowers
Feel the shame-wounds in his hands pierce through my own,
And breathe despair that turns my lungs to stone
And feel the dead Christ weighing on my bone.

# Tyrannus Mundi

By Edmund John

THERE is a menace in the cold dank breath
That rises from the swamp stretched stark like death
Through mouldering fungi to the world's sick edge:
And the marsh moans in evil elegy
Of deathlike odours and one blackened tree,
And reeds, and bubbles clustering round the sedge.

There are things moving in the damp grey grass,
Obscure and formless with dead eyes like glass;
And through rank rushes the weird wind makes sound
As of dead lips that whisper in decay;
And sinister the tree's bare branches sway
With liverwort and henbane twisted round.

The sky is like a cloak, grey, dim and vast,
With low and monstrous clouds that hurry past,
And moist mad mists that writhe across the plain;
And in the pool there floats a drowned man's face,
Mud in the eyes, and wet wild weeds to grace
His brow with symbol of the curse of Cain.

He gazes upward dreaming of his crime,
The livid lips sealed up with stagnant slime,
Marked with a message from the mists above
To tell me that the place where I have come
Is home of Anguish where all hopes succumb,
The place of Pain victorious over Love.

Here dwells the conqueror of the wan world,
And agonies beat down, and red limbs curled,
Torment of beauty and the spirit's frost,
Of hope of things to come, of young lips stained,
Of longing unfulfilled, desire attained,
And bitter memory of sweet things lost.

## TYRANNUS MUNDI

I would invoke the soul of this foul thing
To curse it . . . vainly . . . though all hell should ring
Across the wastes. And lo, a threatening sound,
Low, dolorous, throbs through the swamp's slow sigh,
Relentless, like a terrible reply;
And a dark vapour curls up from the ground.

Then rises a gigantic sexless form,
With hanging breasts and arms spread cruciform,
And aweful eyes red with the soul of Pain,
And obscene mutilations, and wild hair
Draggled in blood, and gnawed lips, and despair;
And in its hands Love's body torn in twain.

# Sonnet

## By Stephen Southwold

When I am cold, and my last breath is sped;
And I have reached the end of all my days;
I pray you, grave no stone above my head
With trivial homage, and with sounding phrase.
But sometimes, in the hush of eventide,
Ere that the night has blotted out the sun,
Speak of me gladly; not as one who died
Untimely, ere his little race was run.
Say that I passed before the chill of age,
With icy fingers pressing round my heart,
Had killed the fire, and fury of my rage;
And I had seen my gift of song depart
With weak self-pity, and with anile tears,
Beside the ashes of my splendid years.

# The Dancer

By Louise Morgan Sill

Dim sound of violins, plucked on their strings
With quick abandon, and a low-voiced flute
Murmuring plaintive, slow. . . .
With stealthy step she steals from the dark wings
And to the music all her beauty flings.

Her limbs like roses in the twilight glow,
Her eyes are like the eyes of a young fawn
That gleam but give no light.
Her lips are crimson as a sunset low
Upon day-weary waves that wanly flow.

Her weaving arms allure as if for flight,
And her swift ankle in its silken sheath
Dizzies the watching eyes.
Within the dusk her face stares like a light
Of wisp-fires in a calm and lovely night.

But in her look some cold negation lies,
And in the snakelike motion of her waist—
Undulant, undefined—
Some revelation strange of Lilith's eyes
Glowing demoniac in Paradise.

Dim veils envelop her, but cannot bind
The sinuous grace of curving breast and arm,
Nor fairer make the bloom
Of her sweet blighted flesh. . . . O Life unkind,
O cruel Life, betraying even the blind!

# Grief

## By Hon. Eleanour Norton

I FOUND Grief gazing over quiet seas
To where,—through dusk of night,—
There sparkled one deep, solitary star
Lonely and exquisite.

I dared not look upon her hidden face,
I thought to see her eyes
Filled with the awful and unconquered tears
Of all the centuries.

And then she turned to me, and in those eyes
I saw a smile more deep
And more divine than Joy's! How could I guess
Grief was so beautiful?

# An English Notebook of Voltaire

[*Editorial Note.*—It has been thought right to publish this document of Voltaire, which has been recently discovered in St. Petersburg, exactly as it was found. The curious spelling has been left unedited. Voltaire's English is good enough to be perfectly intelligible, even when he uses abbreviations. Two paragraphs have been omitted from the original owing to their obscenity.]

ENGLAND is meetting of all relligions, as the royal exchange is the rendez-vous of all foreigners

When I see Christians cursing Jews, methings I see children beating their fathers.

Jewish relligion is the mother of (the) Christianity, and grand mother of the mahometism.

One greatest error among christians is about the holy ghost. Formerly when a man was made a lawyer in Jerusalem, he was so by these words, *receive the holy ghost*

Now one doth make use of the same words in making a priest.

t'is an meer fancy to believe the character of a priest is indelebile. A lay man is made a clergy man only by designation, tis an office which can be revoked, and which was revoked effectually in the old ages of Christianity, when a priest wanted church and fonction.

*Go and teach all nations*

this was said to all christians before the distinction of clergy and layty

For to get som authority over others
One must make oneself as unlike
Them as one can. T'is a sure way
Of dazling the eyes of the crowd.
So the priests appears in longue gown *etc.*

To have Lowis of gold and crowns, and to reckon in imaginary livres is a contrivence of the kings and banquiers to get money.

It seems that one doth deal in England with the quakers

as with the Peers of the realm, which give their verdict upon their honour, not upon their oath.

Theatre in England is boundless.

The stage in England is boundless and temerarious without decency etc.

English tongue, barren and barbarous in its origin is now plentiful and sweet, like a garden ful of exotiks plants.

In England every body is publik spirited

In France every body is concern'd in his own interest only

The English is full of taughts, french all in miens, compliments, swet words, and curious of engaging outside, overflowing in words, obsequious with pride, and very much self concern'd under the appearance of a pleasant modesty.

The English is sparing of words, openly proud and unconcerned he gives the most quick birth as he can to his taughts, for fear of loosing his time.

Is nothing more hard than to be quallified for . . . society

We arrive to the same work by differents ways, a chartusian fryar kneels and prostrates himself all along before me, a quacker speaks to me allwyais covered, both do so to follow the gospel, in the most rigorous sense.

Let M. of V.* and Prince E.† travel one in Germania and the other in France, if they will enjoy their reputation

We have begun in France to write pretty well, before we have began to think. English on the contrary, is not one thought whorthy of remark in Voiture, or Malherbe.

Malboroug despisead French because he had conquer'd 'em, Law despisd 'em also because he had cheated them.

We are commonly unconcerned and careless of all things which deserve our search and admiration. But for to make amends, we admire the most common objects and the les whorthy of attention of a wise man. How very few are wise enough to admire the daily birth of ligth and the new creation of all things wich (are) born every day with light; the everlasting regulation of stars, the perpetual miracle of generation, effects of load stone, of lime burning with water, how very few could fixe their eys upon these usual prodiges, whereof the use is so trivial, and the cause so absconded.

* Villars. † Eugène.

But we see attentively and we admire a rope danser, a mountebank, a preecher, a french marquis, a coch of sex (coach of six)?

Thank Prudent Anna's providential reign for Peace, and Plenty both of coin and grain. Thank the scotch peers . . .

Thirty and one of july one thousand seven hundred twenty and six, I saw floating islands nyer (near) St Om . . .

In june of the present yar, Mylord Duc * was turn'd out, force dead, in july.

An yong mathematician blind from his birth, being asked by King Charles the Second whether there were in the world two men who had the same number of hairs upon their heads, he answerd positively there were, and he proved it peremptorily. T'is doubtless, said he, there are more many heads on the earth than hairs upon a single head. to clair (clear) the matter, I suppose there are a million of men, the first of them hath for exemple a single hair on his head, the second two, the thirdh tree, etc. T'is certain the utmost could not have a million of hairs; therefore he would have only just the same quantity as one of the precedents. Consequently t'is plain there are surely two men upon the earth who have the same number of hairs, and a great deall more than two men, because the number of heads exceeds infinitely that of hairs in a single person.

There was a parson in France, who for to saunter away the time was playing one day in the morning at piquet, with his own whore. In the meantime, some good countrymen, and great many devotious women were at loss round about the altar, in order to communicate, and waiting upon their kneels for their parson. The clerc of the church comes in a great hurry to his master. Make haste, says he, good sire, come to administer god to your people. The parson rises on a sudden, leaves off his game, kiss his whore, takes up his wafers box, but by mistake, he puts in it som counters of ivory of the same figure wherewith he plaid, and he runs to the altar as he was distributing god in wafers to the people. He gives to one old woman an ivory counter instead of a wafer. This old jade, after having received her portion of god, sneaks into a secret part of the church to pray and collect herself;- she wonders

* Le duc de Bourbon, premier ministre de Louis XV.

at first that she can't swallow up the host. She endeavours to chaw it, but in vain, at last she goes to the priest in the vestry: Good sir, sais she, I believe you gave me god the father, so he is tough and hard.

A famous critick having gathered together all the faults of an eminent poet, made a present of them to Apollo, who receiv'd him very graciously, and resolved to make the author a suitable return for the trouble he had been at, in collecting them; in order to this he set before him a sack of wheat, as it had been threshed out of the sheaf. He then bid him to pick out the chaff from among the corn, and lay it aside by itself. The critick applied himself to the task with great industry and pleasure, and after having made the due separation, was presented by Apollo with the chaff for his pains.

1726, in the month of august

An officer of the guards, who was a relation to mylord Peterborough and of the same name, eight and twenty years old, rich and healthy, but cloyd with live, for som private reasons shot himself.* Before he perform'd this business, he settled all his other affairs in the best way he could, paid his debts, sent som present to his friends, wrote to his relations, composed som verses not after the manner of Petronius, but like an Englishman with strenghth and force the two late verses were

> but the truest lodanum of all
> is resolution and a ball.

As soon he made up all his letters, he stood up right overagainst a lookingglass and shot him self.

Rara est concordia fratrum

Seldom brothers agree together, t'is for this reason sovereings of Europe are stiled brothers to each other. they pursue, they deceive, they betray, they hate one another like true brothers, and after having fight with the utmost fury, and having lay wast respectively their kingdoms, they take a solemn mourning upon the death one of another.

I think oft of Mr B.† and Mr P.‡ there are both

* Killed himself with a blow of pistol.
† Bolingbroke. ‡ Pope.

virtuous and learned; of equal wit and understanding, but quite contrary in their wais. P loves retirement and silence, virtuous and learned for himself. B more communicatif, diffuse everiwhere his virtue and his knowledge. B is a dark lanthorn tho' it is illuminated within, it affords no manner of light, or advantage to such as stood by it. the other is an ordinary lamp which consumes and wastes itself for the benefit of every passengers.

M. B.* was as great whoremaster as great statesman. He was in the bloom of his youth and of his whoring too, when queen Anna made him secretary of war. A swarm of strumpets was walking in St James park when a sudden rumor was spred M. B. was raised to that plac which is whorth five thousand pounds a year, all the whores cried out, shout overjoyed God bless us, five thousand pounds all among us.

Verses of the earl of Rochester ex tempore:—

here is the health to our pleasant witty king
whose word no man relies on,
who never said a foolish thing,
or ever did a wise one.

Nature, purity, perspicuity, simplicity never walk in the clouds. They are obvious to all capacities and where they are not evident they don't exist.

Ignorant—suported by more ignorant men. Dunces are the fownders of all relligions, men of wit, fownders of heresies, men of understanding lawgh at both.

They say Cromwell was nothing less than an enthusiaste, he was so far from being a fanatick that he rul'd all who were so. He had a quick sighted sagacity, a firm understanding and irresistible eloquence, a courage above all mankind, a profund knowledge of the world. He did not aim at first at the supreme power, but he was carried on by degrees to the trhone, making allwais the best use of the least circumstances. His humour was severe, but sometimes he indulged privately to some mirth with his private friends.

One day he was drinking friendly in his closet with Sr John Milton and Waller. In the mean time, the deputies of the clergy came to make some representations, he bid

* Bolingbroke.

them stay in the parlor, saying he was retired with god. His custom was to consult god or to seem to consult him upon all occasion and that roguery was called 'to seek the lord', while the priests stayed without and Cromwell was tipling within. One of the compani endeavouring to draw out a cork of a bottle. The scrue fell down on the floor, and everybody look'd for it, Cromwell himself was searching it up and down. Those priest, said he, those scoundrels fancy we are not seeking for the lord and we look only for the corkscrue.

Meer bashfulness without merit is awkward, merit without modesty insolent. But modest merit has a double claim to acceptance and generally meets with as many patrons as beholders.

Mistress XX is like Titus the emperor. When by chance she has made no person happy in a day, she cries out at night, o count, I have lost this day.

Mr Blwet told me this day 20 July that he was married to fortune's daughter, who is mis' fortune.

A man was burnt alive in Paris for saying he was the Pope's son. A merry fellow said upon that account: deus est mortus quia filium dei se fecit.

From the rubishes of the roman empire several kingdoms are formed and grounded upon its ruines; in the same manner, italian tongue, the french, the spanish arose from the ruines of the roman language.

Plutark tells us in Cesar's life he numbered the citizens in Rome and their number amounted to no more than an hundred and twenty thousand which was but of three hundred and fourty thousand before the civil wars—whow that thinness of people may be reconciled with the prodigious populousness mentioned by other authors, 'tis hard to know, they talk of four millions in Augustus time.

Berenice, Andromache, the Gamester, Cid, Pompee translated.

Questions

If there are two men upon the face of the earth who have exactly the same number of hairs.

If a man born blind who had a notion of *square* and

*round* by the action of touching could distinguish a circle from a square upon the first recovery of his sight.

Cromwell built nothing—there is no monument remaining of him,

His body together with those of ireton and bradsaw were taken out of their coffins at Westminster, and drawn upon hurdles to Tyburn, where they were hanged by the neck for some hours, their head chopt of afterwards and perched on Westminster hall 30 January 1661 a year after the restoration.

Three plagues in London under Elisabeth, Charles the first and Charles the second.

Mr Shipping sent to the tower for having said that the king's speech was calculated for the meridian of Germany rather than that of London.

In rimer upon english stage

I have found this song of Federick Barbarousse in the twelth century

Plas my cavalier frances
E la donna catalana
E l'ovrar ginoes
Lou cantar provensales
E la dansa trivizana
E la corps arragones
E la perla juliana
les mans e cara d'Angles
E lou donzel de Thuscana.

A lord of Buckhurst wrought a play before Shakespeare, whose subject was Godorbuk king, there the two sons of the king quarell, the elder kills the younger, the queen provoked, kills the elder, and then to make a clear stage, the people rise and dispatch old Godorbuck.

Quaere if St Louis pawned the eucharist, if Joinville confessed him.

M. Lock's reasonabless of christian relligion is really a new relligion.

One of the french prophets having boasted that at any apointed day, he would raise a dead body from his grave, the government sent guards to the place apointed, to keep of the rabble, and to keep all things in quiet that the play could be acted without disturbance.

Brandon's motto.

Cloth of gold do not despise
if thou art match'd with cloth of frize
Cloth of frize be not too bold
if thou art match'd with cloth of gold.

In Lapland the season they are the most afraid of is the summer. they fly in june with their herds of rhen deers toward the most bleak parts of the country buried in eternal snow.

Musick restored by the french and flemish in Europe before the Italians knew any thought of it. Gaudimele under Francis the first composed the *Noëls* and *Roland lassé*, florished under Henry the third and Henry 4.

A king is in England a necessary thing to preserve the spirit of liberty, as a post to a fencer to exert himself.

Allegory like a glass in which some thing is contained, but eazily seen.

the pope gave leave to a catholick woman of marrying count Shumburg la lippe who had another wive madame de la lippe mother to the present count la lippe.

The same army that had cut of Charles the first and Lawd was ready to make an arbitrary king of Charles 2 and a pope of the arbs* of Cant. . . .

Colonel Hawker leading king Ch. from W.† to With,‡ and the king telling him he was accountable to God alone, faith, said he, I think they will send you thither to present your account.

* Archbishop. † Westminster. ‡ Whitehall.

# The World Set Free

## A Story of Mankind

### By H. G. Wells

### CHAPTER THE SECOND

#### The Last War

§ 3.

When the rather brutish young aviator with the bullet head and the black hair close-cropped "*en brosse*" who was in charge of the French special scientific corps heard presently of this disaster to the War Control, he was so wanting in imagination in any sphere but his own that he laughed. Small matter to him that Paris was burning. His mother and father and sister lived at Caudebec; and the only sweetheart he had ever had, and it was poor love-making then, was a girl in Rouen. He slapped his second-in-command on the shoulder. "Now," he said, "there's nothing on earth to stop us going to Berlin and giving them tit-for-tat. . . . Strategy and reasons of state—they're over. . . . Come along, my boy, and we'll just show these old women what we can do when they let us have our heads."

He spent five minutes telephoning, and then he went out into the courtyard of the château in which he had been installed and shouted for his automobile. Things would have to move quickly, because there was scarcely an hour and a half before dawn. He looked at the sky and noted with satisfaction a heavy bank of clouds athwart the pallid east.

He was a young man of infinite shrewdness, and his material and aeroplanes were scattered all over the country-side, stuck away in barns, covered with hay, hidden in woods. A hawk could not have discovered any of them

without coming within reach of a gun. But that night he only wanted one of the machines, and it was handy and quite prepared under a tarpaulin between two ricks not a couple of miles away; he was going to Berlin with that and just one other man. Two men would be enough for what he meant to do. . . .

He had in his hands the black complement to all those other gifts science was urging upon unregenerate mankind, the gift of destruction, and he was an adventurous rather than a sympathetic type. . . .

He was a dark young man with something negroid about his gleaming face. He smiled like one who is favoured and anticipates great pleasures. There was an exotic richness, a chuckling flavour, about the voice in which he gave his orders, and he pointed his remarks with the long finger of a hand that was hairy and exceptionally big.

"We'll give them tit-for-tat," he said. "We'll give them tit-for-tat. No time to lose, boys. . . ."

And presently over the cloud-banks that lay above Westphalia and Saxony the swift aeroplane, with its atomic engine as noiseless as a dancing sunbeam, and its phosphorescent gyroscopic compass, flew like an arrow to the heart of the Central European hosts.

It did not soar very high; it skimmed a few hundred feet above the banked darknesses of cumulus that hid the world, ready to plunge at once into their wet obscurities should some hostile flier range into vision. The tense young steersman divided his attention between the guiding stars above and the level, tumbled surfaces of the vapour strata that hid the world below. Over great spaces those banks lay as even as a frozen lava-flow and almost as still, and then they were rent by ragged areas of translucency, pierced by clear chasms, so that dim patches of the land below gleamed remotely through abysses. Once he saw quite distinctly the plan of a big railway station outlined in lamps and signals, and once the flames of a burning rick showing livid through a boiling drift of smoke on the side of some great hill. But if the world was masked it was alive with sounds. Up through that vapour floor came the deep roar of trains, the whistles of horns of motor cars, a sound of rifle fire away to the south, and as he drew near his destination the crowing of cocks. . . .

The sky above the indistinct horizons of this cloud sea was at first starry and then paler wth a light that crept from north to east as the dawn came on. The Milky Way was invisible in the blue, and the lesser stars vanished. The face of the adventurer at the steering-wheel, darkly visible ever and again by the oval greenish glow of the compass face, had something of that firm beauty which all concentrated purpose gives, and something of the happiness of an idiot child that has at last got hold of the matches. His companion, a less imaginative type, sat with his legs spread wide over the long, coffin-shaped box which contained in its compartments the three atomic bombs, the new bombs that would continue to explode indefinitely and which no one so far had ever seen in action. Hitherto Carolinum, their essential substance, had been tested only in almost infinitesimal quantities within steel chambers embedded in lead. Beyond the thought of great destruction slumbering in the black spheres between his legs, and a keen resolve to follow out very exactly the instructions that had been given him, the man's mind was a blank. His aquiline profile against the starlight expressed nothing but a profound gloom.

The sky below grew clearer as the Central European capital was approached.

So far they had been singularly lucky and had been challenged by no aeroplanes at all. The frontier scouts they must have passed in the night; probably these were mostly under the clouds; the world was wide and they had had luck in not coming close to any soaring sentinel. Their machine was painted a pale grey that lay almost invisibly over the cloud levels below. But now the east was flushing with the near ascent of the sun, Berlin was but a score of miles ahead, and the luck of the Frenchmen held. By imperceptible degrees the clouds below dissolved. . . .

Away to the north-eastward in a cloudless pool of gathering light, and with all its nocturnal illuminations still blazing, was Berlin. The left finger of the steersman verified roads and open spaces below upon the mica-covered square of map that was fastened by his wheel. There, in a series of lake-like expansions, was the Havel away to the right, over by those forests must be Spandau; there

the river split about the Potsdam island, and right ahead was Charlottenburg, cleft by a great thoroughfare that fell like an indicating beam of light straight to the imperial headquarters. There, plain enough, was the Thiergarten; beyond rose the imperial palace, and to the right those tall buildings, those clustering, be-flagged, be-masted roofs, must be the offices in which the Central European staff was housed. It was all coldly clear and colourless in the dawn.

He looked up suddenly as a humming sound grew out of nothing and became swiftly louder. Nearly overhead a German aeroplane was circling down from an immense height to challenge him. He made a gesture with his left arm to the gloomy man behind, and then gripped his little wheel with both hands, crouched over it and twisted his neck to look upward. He was attentive, tightly strung, but quite contemptuous of their ability to hurt him. No German alive he was assured could outfly him, or indeed any one of the best Frenchmen. He imagined they might strike at him as a hawk strikes, but they were men coming down out of the bitter cold up there, in a hungry, spiritless morning mood; they came slanting down like a sword swung by a lazy man, and not so rapidly but that he was able to slip away from under them and get between them and Berlin. They began challenging him in German with a megaphone when they were still perhaps a mile away. The words came to him, rolled up into a mere blob of hoarse sound. Then, gathering alarm from his grim silence, they gave chase and swept down, a hundred yards above him, perhaps, and a couple of hundred behind. They were beginning to understand what he was. He ceased to watch them and concentrated himself on the city ahead, and for a time the two aeroplanes raced. . . .

A bullet came tearing through the air by him, as though someone was tearing paper. A second followed. Something tapped the machine.

It was time to act. The broad avenues, the park, the palaces below rushed widening out nearer and nearer to them.

"Ready!" said the steersman.

The gaunt face hardened to grimness, and with both hands the bomb-thrower lifted the big atomic bomb from the box and steadied it against the side. It was a black sphere two feet in diameter. Between its handles was a

little celluloid stud, and to this he bent his head until his lips touched it. Then he had to bite in order to let the air in upon the inducive. Sure of its accessibility, he craned his neck over the side of the aeroplane and judged his pace and distance. Then very quickly he bent forward, bit the stud and hoisted the bomb over the side.

"Round," he whispered inaudibly.

The bomb flashed blinding scarlet in mid-air and fell, a descending column of blaze eddying spirally in the midst of a whirlwind. Both the aeroplanes were tossed like shuttlecocks, hurled high and sideways; and the steersman with gleaming eyes and set teeth fought in great banking curves for a balance. The gaunt man clung tight with hands and knees; his nostrils dilated, his teeth biting his lips. He was firmly strapped. . . .

When he could look down again it was like looking down upon the crater of a small volcano. In the open garden before the Imperial castle a shuddering star of evil splendour spurted and poured up smoke and flame towards them like an accusation. They were too high to distinguish people clearly, or mark the bomb's effect upon the building until suddenly the façade tottered and crumbled before the flare as sugar dissolves in water. The man stared for a moment, showed all his long teeth, and then staggered into the cramped standing position his straps permitted, hoisted out and bit another bomb and sent it down after its fellow.

The explosion came this time more directly underneath the aeroplane and shot it upward edgeways. The bomb box tipped to the point of disgorgement, and the bomb-thrower was pitched forward upon the third bomb with his face close to its celluloid stud. He clutched its handles and with a sudden gust of determination that the thing should not escape him, bit its stud. Before he could hurl it over, the monoplane was slipping sideways. Everything was falling sideways. Instinctively he gave himself up to gripping, his body holding the bomb in its place.

Then that bomb had exploded also, and steersman, thrower, and aeroplane were just flying rags and splinters of metal and drops of moisture in the air, and a third column of fire rushed eddying down upon the doomed buildings below. . . .

§ 4.

Never before in the history of warfare had there been a continuing explosive; indeed, up to the middle of the twentieth century the only explosives known were combustibles whose explosiveness was due entirely to their instantaneousness; and these atomic bombs which science burst upon the world that night were strange even to the men who used them. Those used by the Allies were lumps of pure Carolinum, painted on the outside with unoxidised cydonator inducive enclosed hermetically in a case of membranium. A little celluloid stud between the handles by which the bomb was lifted was arranged so as to be easily torn off and admit air to the inducive, which at once became active and set up radio-activity in the outer layer of the Carolinum sphere. This liberated fresh inducive, and so in a few minutes the whole bomb was a blazing continual explosion. The Central European bombs were the same, except that they were larger and had a more complicated arrangement for animating the inducive.

Always before in the development of warfare the shells and rockets fired had been but momentarily explosive, they had gone off in an instant once for all, and if there was nothing living or valuable within reach of the concussion and the flying fragments, then they were spent and over. But Carolinum, which belonged to the $\beta$-group of Hyslop's so-called "suspended degenerator" elements, once its degenerative process had been induced, continued a furious radiation of energy, and nothing could arrest it. Of all Hyslop's artificial elements, Carolinum was the most heavily stored with energy and the most dangerous to make and handle. To this day it remains the most potent degenerator known. What the earlier twentieth-century chemists called its half period was seventeen days; that is to say, it poured out half of the huge store of energy in its great molecules in the space of seventeen days, the next seventeen days' emission was a half of that first period's outpouring, and so on. As with all radio-active substances, this Carolinum, though every seventeen days its power is halved, though constantly it diminishes towards the imperceptible, is never entirely exhausted, and to this day the battle-fields and bomb-fields

of that frantic time in human history are sprinkled with radiant matter and so centres of inconvenient rays. . . .

What happened then when the celluloid stud was opened was that the inducive oxidised and became active. Then the surface of the Carolinum began to degenerate. This degeneration passed only slowly into the substance of the bomb. A moment or so after its explosion began it was still mainly an inert sphere exploding superficially, a big, inanimate nucleus wrapped in flame and thunder. Those that were thrown from aeroplanes fell in this state; they reached the ground still mainly solid and, melting soil and rock in their progress, bored into the earth. There, as more and more of the Carolinum became active, the bomb spread itself out into a monstrous cavern of fiery energy at the base of what became very speedily a miniature active volcano. The Carolinum, unable to disperse freely, drove into and mixed up with a boiling confusion of molten soil and superheated steam, and so remained, spinning furiously and maintaining an eruption that lasted for years or months or weeks according to the size of the bomb employed and the chances of its dispersal. Once launched, the bomb was absolutely unapproachable and uncontrollable until its forces were nearly exhausted, and from the crater that burst open above it, puffs of heavy incandescent vapour and fragments of viciously punitive rock and mud, saturated with Carolinum, and each a centre of scorching and blistering energy, were flung high and far.

Such was the crowning triumph of military science, the ultimate explosive, that was to give the "decisive touch" to war. . . .

## § 5.

A recent historical writer has described the world of that time as one that "believed in established words and was invincibly blind to the obvious in things." Certainly it seems now that nothing could have been more obvious to the people of the early twentieth century than the rapidity with which war was becoming impossible. And as certainly they did not see it. They did not see it until the atomic bombs burst in their fumbling hands. Yet the broad facts must have glared upon any

intelligent mind. All through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the amount of energy that men were able to command was continually increasing. Applied to warfare that meant that the power to inflict a blow, the power to destroy, was continually increasing. There was no increase whatever in the ability to escape. Every sort of passive defence, armour, fortifications, and so forth, was being outmastered by this tremendous increase on the destructive side. Destruction was becoming so facile that any little body of malcontents could use it; it was revolutionising the problems of police and internal rule. Before the last war began it was a matter of common knowledge that a man could carry about in a handbag an amount of latent energy sufficient to wreck half a city. These facts were before the minds of everybody; the children in the streets knew them. And yet the world still, as the Americans used to phrase it, "fooled around" with the paraphernalia and pretensions of war.

It is only by realising this profound, this fantastic divorce between the scientific and intellectual movement on the one hand and the world of the lawyer-politician on the other that the men of a later time can hope to understand this preposterous state of affairs. Social organisation was still in the barbaric stage. There were already great numbers of actively intelligent men and much private and commercial civilisation, but the community as a whole was aimless, untrained, and unorganised to the pitch of imbecility. Collective civilisation, the "Modern State," was still in the womb of the future. . . .

§ 6.

But let us return to Frederick Barnet's *Wander Jahre* and its account of the experiences of a common man during the war time. While these terrific disclosures of scientific possibility were happening in Paris and Berlin, Barnet and his company were industriously entrenching themselves in Belgian Luxembourg.

He tells of the mobilisation and of his summer's day journey through the north of France and the Ardennes in a few vivid phrases. The country was browned by a warm summer, the trees a little touched with autumnal colour, and

the wheat already golden. When they stopped for an hour at Hirson, men and women with tricolor badges upon the platform distributed cakes and glasses of beer to the thirsty soldiers and there was much cheerfulness. "Such good, cool beer it was," he wrote. "I had had nothing to eat nor drink since Epsom."

A number of monoplanes, "like giant swallows," he notes were scouting in the pink evening sky.

Barnet's battalion was sent through the Sedan country to a place called Virton and thence to a point in the woods on the line to Jemelle. Here they detrained, bivouacked uneasily by the railway—trains and stores were passing along it all night—and next morning he marched eastward through a cold, overcast dawn and a morning, first cloudy and then blazing, over a large, spacious countryside interspersed by forest towards Arlon.

There the infantry were set to work upon a line of masked entrenchments and hidden rifle pits between St. Hubert and Virton that were designed to check and delay any advance from the east upon the fortified line of the Meuse. They had their orders, and for two days they worked without either a sight of the enemy or any suspicion of the disaster that had abruptly decapitated the armies of Europe and turned the west of Paris and the centre of Berlin into blazing miniatures of the destruction of Pompeii.

And the news, when it did come, came attenuated. "We heard there had been mischief with aeroplanes and bombs in Paris," Barnet relates; "but it didn't seem to follow that 'They' weren't still somewhere elaborating their plans and issuing orders. When the enemy began to emerge from the woods in front of us, we cheered and blazed away and didn't trouble much more about anything but the battle in hand. If now and then one cocked up an eye into the sky to see what was happening there, the rip of a bullet soon brought one down to the horizontal again. . . ."

That battle went on for three days all over a great stretch of country between Louvain on the north and Longwy to the south. It was essentially a rifle and infantry struggle. The aeroplanes do not seem to have taken any decisive share in the actual fighting for some days, though no doubt they affected the strategy from the first by preventing surprise movements. They were aeroplanes with atomic

engines, but they were not provided with atomic bombs, which were manifestly unsuitable for field use, nor indeed had they any very effective kind of bomb. And though they manœuvred against each other, and there was rifle shooting at them and between them, there was little actual aerial fighting. Either the airmen were indisposed to fight, or the commanders on both sides preferred to reserve these machines for scouting. . . .

After a day or so of digging and scheming, Barnet found himself in the forefront of a battle. He had made his section of rifle pits chiefly along a line of deep, dry ditch that gave a means of intercommunication; he had had the earth scattered over the adjacent field, and he had masked his preparations with tussocks of corn and poppy. The hostile advance came blindly and unsuspiciously across the fields below and would have been cruelly handled indeed, if someone away to the right had not opened fire too soon.

"It was a queer thrill when these fellows came into sight," he confesses, "and not a bit like manœuvres. They halted for a time on the edge of the wood and then came forward in an open line. They kept walking nearer to us and not looking at us, but away to the right of us. Even when they began to be hit, and their officers' whistles woke them up, they didn't seem to see us. One or two halted to fire and then they all went back towards the wood again. They went slowly at first, looking round at us, then the shelter of the wood seemed to draw them and they trotted. I fired rather mechanically and missed, then I fired again, and then I became earnest to hit something, made sure of my sighting, and aimed very carefully at a blue back that was dodging about in the corn. At first I couldn't satisfy myself and didn't shoot, his movements were so spasmodic and uncertain; then I think he came to a ditch or some such obstacle and halted for a moment. '*Got* you,' I whispered and pulled the trigger.

"I had the strangest sensations about that man. In the first instance, when I felt that I had hit him, I was irradiated with joy and pride. . . .

"I sent him spinning. He jumped and threw up his arms. . . .

"Then I saw the corn tops waving and had glimpses

of him flapping about. Suddenly I felt sick. I hadn't killed him. . . .

"In some way he was disabled and smashed up and yet able to struggle about. I began to think. . . .

"For nearly two hours that Prussian was agonising in the corn. Either he was calling out or someone was shouting to him. . . .

"Then he jumped up,—he seemed to try to get up upon his feet with one last effort; and then he fell like a sack and lay quite still and never moved again.

"He had been unendurable, and I believe someone had shot him dead. I had been wanting to do so for some time. . . ."

The enemy began sniping the rifle pits from shelters they made for themselves in the woods below. A man was hit in the pit next to Barnet and began cursing and crying out in a violent rage. Barnet crawled along the ditch to him and found him in great pain, covered with blood, frantic with indignation and with the half of his right hand smashed to a pulp. "Look at this," he kept repeating, hugging it and then extending it. "Damned foolery! Damned foolery! My right hand, sir! My right hand!"

For some time Barnet could do nothing with him. The man was consumed by his tortured realisation of the evil silliness of war, the realisation which had come upon him in a flash with the bullet that had destroyed his skill and use as an artificer for ever. He was looking at the vestiges with a horror that made him impenetrable to any other idea. At last the poor wretch let Barnet tie up his bleeding stump and help him along the ditch that conducted him deviously out of range. . . .

When Barnet returned, his men were already calling out for water, and all day long the line of pits suffered greatly from thirst. For food they had chocolate and bread.

"At first," he says, "I was extraordinarily excited by my baptism of fire. Then, as the heat of the day came on, I experienced an enormous tedium and discomfort. The flies became extremely troublesome and my little grave of a rifle pit was invaded by ants. I could not get up or move about, for someone in the trees had got a mark on me. I kept thinking of the dead Prussian down among the corn

and of the bitter outcries of my own man. Damned foolery! It *was* Damned foolery. But who was to blame? How had we got to this? . . .

"Early in the afternoon an aeroplane tried to dislodge us with dynamite bombs, but she was hit by bullets once or twice and suddenly dived down over beyond the trees.

"'From Holland to the Alps this day,' I thought, 'there must be crouching and lying between half and a million men, trying to inflict irreparable damage upon one another. The thing is idiotic to the pitch of impossibility. It is a dream. Presently I shall wake up. . . .'

"Then the phrase changed itself in my mind. 'Presently mankind will wake up.'

"I lay speculating just how many thousands of men there were among these hundreds of thousands, whose spirits were in rebellion against all these ancient traditions of flag and empire. Weren't we, perhaps, already in the throes of the last crisis, in that darkest moment of a nightmare's horror before the sleeper will endure no more of it—and wakes?

"I don't know how my speculations ended. I think they were not so much ended as distracted by the distant thudding of the guns that were opening fire at long range upon Namur."

## § 7.

But as yet Barnet had seen no more than the mildest beginnings of modern warfare. So far he had taken part only in a little shooting. The bayonet attack by which the advanced line was broken was made at a place called Croix Rouge, more than twenty miles away, and that night, under cover of the darkness, the rifle pits were abandoned and he got his company away without further loss.

His regiment fell back unpressed behind the fortified lines between Namur and Sedan, entrained at a station called Mettet, and was sent northward by Antwerp and Rotterdam to Haarlem. Hence they marched into North Holland. It was only after the march into Holland that he began to realise the monstrous and catastrophic nature of the struggle in which he was playing his undistinguished part.

He describes very pleasantly the journey through the hills and open land of Brabant, the repeated crossing of arms of the Rhine, and the change from the undulating scenery of Belgium to the flat, rich meadows, the sunlit dyke roads, and the countless windmills of the Dutch levels. In those days there was unbroken land from Alkmaar and Leiden to the Dollart. Three great provinces, South Holland, North Holland, and Zuiderzee-land, reclaimed at various times between the early tenth century and 1945, and all many feet below the level of the waves outside the dykes, spread out their lush polders to the northern sun and sustained a dense industrious population. An intricate web of laws and custom and tradition ensured a perpetual vigilance and a perpetual defence against the beleaguering sea. For more than two hundred and fifty miles from Walcheren to Friesland stretched a line of embankments and pumping stations that was the admiration of the world.

If some curious god had chosen to watch the course of events in those northern provinces while that flanking march of the British was in progress, he would have found a convenient and appropriate seat for his observation upon one of the great cumulous clouds that were drifting slowly across the blue sky during all these eventful days before the great catastrophe. For that was the quality of the weather,—hot and clear, with something of a breeze, and underfoot dry and a little inclined to be dusty. This watching god would have looked down upon broad stretches of sunlit green, sunlit save for the creeping patches of shadow cast by the clouds, upon sky-reflecting meres, fringed and divided up by masses of willow and large areas of silvery weeds, upon white roads lying bare to the sun and upon a tracery of blue canals. The pastures were alive with cattle, the roads had a busy traffic of beasts and bicycles and gaily coloured peasants' automobiles, the hues of the innumerable motor barges in the canal vied with the eventfulness of the roadways; and everywhere in solitary steadings, amidst ricks and barns, in groups by the wayside, in straggling villages, each with its fine old church, or in compact towns laced with canals and abounding in bridges and clipped trees, were human habitations.

The people of this countryside were not belligerents. The interests and sympathies alike of Holland had been

so divided that to the end she remained undecided and passive in the struggle of the world Powers. And everywhere along the roads taken by the marching armies clustered groups and crowds of impartially observant spectators, women and children in peculiar white caps and old-fashioned sabots, and elderly clean-shaven men quietly thoughtful over their long pipes. They had no fear of their invaders; the days when "soldiering" meant bands of licentious looters had long since passed away. . . .

That watcher among the clouds would have seen a great distribution of khaki-uniformed men and khaki-painted material over the whole of the sunken area of Holland. He would have marked the long trains, packed with men or piled with great guns and war material, creeping slowly, alert for train-wreckers, along the north-going lines; he would have seen the Scheldt and Rhine choked with shipping and pouring out still more men and still more material; he would have noticed halts and provisionings and detrainments, and the long, bustling caterpillars of cavalry and infantry, the maggot-like wagons, the huge beetles of great guns, crawling under the poplars along the dykes and roads northward, along ways lined by the neutral, unmolested, ambiguously observant Dutch. All the barges and shipping upon the canals had been requisitioned for transport. In that clear, bright, warm weather it would all have looked from above like some extravagant festival of animated toys.

As the sun sank westward the spectacle must have become a little indistinct because of a golden haze; everything must have become warmer and more glowing, and because of the lengthening of the shadows more manifestly in relief. The shadows of the tall churches grew longer and longer until they touched the horizon and mingled in the universal shadow; and then, slow, and soft, and wrapping the world in fold after fold of deepening blue, came the night,—the night at first obscurely simple, and then with faint points here and there, and then jewelled in darkling splendour with a hundred thousand lights. Out of that mingling of darkness and ambiguous glares the noise of an unceasing activity would have arisen, the louder and plainer now because there was no longer any distraction of sight.

It may be that watcher, drifting in the pellucid gulf beneath the stars, watched all through the night; it may be that he dozed. But if he gave way to so natural a proclivity, assuredly on the fourth night of the great flank march he was aroused, for that was the night of the battle in the air that decided the fate of Holland.

The aeroplanes were fighting at last, and suddenly about him, above and below, with cries and uproar rushing out of the four quarters of heaven, striking, plunging, oversetting, soaring to the zenith and dropping to the ground, they came to assail or defend the myriads below.

Secretly the Central European Power had gathered his flying machines together, and now he threw them as a giant might fling a handful of ten thousand knives over the low country. And amidst that swarming flight were five that drove headlong for the sea walls of Holland, carrying atomic bombs. From north and west and south the allied aeroplanes rose in response and swept down upon this sudden attack. So it was that war in the air began. Men rode upon the whirlwind that night and slew and fell like archangels. The sky rained heroes upon the astonished earth. Surely the last lights of mankind were the best. What was the heavy pounding of your Homeric swordsmen, what was the creaking charge of chariots, beside this swift rush, this crash, this giddy triumph, this headlong swoop to death?

And then athwart this whirling rush of aerial duels that swooped and locked and dropped in the void between the lamp-lights and the stars came a great wind and a crash louder than thunder, and first one and then a score of lengthening fiery serpents plunged hungrily down upon the Dutchmen's dykes and struck between land and sea and flared up again in enormous columns of glare and crimsoned smoke and steam.

And out of the darkness leapt the little land, with its spires and trees, aghast with terror, still and distinct, and the sea, tumbled with anger, red-foaming like a sea of blood. . . .

Over the populous country below went a strange multitudinous crying and a flurry of alarm bells. . . .

The surviving aeroplanes turned about and fled out of

the sky, like things that suddenly know themselves to be wicked. . . .

Through a dozen thunderously flaming gaps that no water might quench the waves came roaring in upon the land. . . .

§ 8.

"We had cursed our luck," says Barnet, "that we could not get to our quarters at Alkmaar that night. There, we were told, were provisions, tobacco, and everything for which we craved. But the main canal from Zaandam and Amsterdam was hopelessly jammed with craft, and we were glad of a chance opening that enabled us to get out of the main column and lie up in a kind of little harbour very much neglected and weedgrown before a deserted house. We broke into this and found some herrings in a barrel, a heap of cheeses, and stone bottles of gin in the cellar; and with this I cheered my starving men. We made fires and toasted the cheese and grilled our herrings. None of us had slept for nearly forty hours, and I determined to stay in this refuge until dawn, and then, if the traffic was still choked, leave the barge and march the rest of the way into Alkmaar.

"This place we had got into was perhaps a hundred yards from the canal, and underneath a little brick bridge we could see the flotilla still and hear the voices of the soldiers. Presently five or six other barges came through and lay up in the mere near by us, and with two of these, full of men of the Antrim regiment, I shared my find of provisions. In return we got tobacco. A large expanse of water spread to the westward of us, and beyond were a cluster of roofs and one or two church towers. The barge was rather cramped for so many men, and I let several squads, thirty or forty perhaps altogether, bivouac on the bank. I did not let them go into the house on account of the furniture, and I left a note of indebtedness for the food we had taken. We were particularly glad of our tobacco and fires, because of the numerous mosquitos that rose about us.

"The gate of the house from which we had provisioned ourselves was adorned with the legend *Vreugde bij Vrede*, 'joy with peace,' and it bore every mark of the busy

retirement of a comfort-loving proprietor. I went along his garden, which was gay and delightful with big bushes of rose and sweet briar, to a quaint little summerhouse, and there I sat and watched the men in groups cooking and squatting along the bank. The sun was setting in a nearly cloudless sky.

"For the last two weeks I had been a wholly occupied man, intent only upon obeying the orders that came down to me. All through this time I had been working to the very limit of my mental and physical faculties and my only moments of rest had been devoted to snatches of sleep. Now came this rare, unexpected interlude and I could look detachedly upon what I was doing and feel something of its infinite wonderfulness. I was irradiated with affection for the men of my company and with admiration at their cheerful acquiescence in the subordination and needs of our position. I watched their proceedings and heard their pleasant voices. How willing those men were! How ready to accept leadership and forget themselves in collective ends! I thought how manfully they had gone through all the strains and toil of the last two weeks, how they had toughened and shaken down to comradeship together, and how much sweetness there is, after all, in our foolish human blood. For they were just one casual sample of the species,—their patience and readiness lay, as the energy of the atom had lain, still waiting to be properly utilised. Again it came to me with overpowering force that the supreme need of our race is leading, that the supreme task is to discover leading, to forget oneself in realising the collective purpose of the race. Once more I saw life plain. . . ."

Very characteristic is that of the "rather too corpulent" young officer, who was afterwards to set it all down in the *Wander Jahre*. Very characteristic, too, it is of the change in men's hearts that was even then preparing a new phase of human history.

He goes on to write of the escape from individuality in science and service and of his discovery of this "salvation." All that was then no doubt very moving and original; now it seems only the most obvious commonplace of human life.

The glow of the sunset faded, the twilight deep-

ened into night. The fires burnt the brighter, and some Irishmen away across the mere started singing. But Barnet's men were too weary for that sort of thing, and soon the bank and the barge were heaped with sleeping forms.

"I alone seemed unable to sleep. I suppose I was over-weary, and after a little feverish slumber by the tiller of the barge I sat up, awake and uneasy. . . .

"That night Holland seemed all sky. There was just a little black lower rim to things, a steeple perhaps or a line of poplars, and then the great hemisphere swept over us. And at first the sky was empty. Yet my uneasiness referred itself in some vague way to the sky.

"And now I was melancholy. I found something strangely sorrowful and submissive in the sleepers all about me, those men who had marched so far, who had left all the established texture of their lives behind them to come upon this mad campaign, this campaign that signified nothing and consumed everything, this mere fever of fighting. I saw how little and feeble is the life of man, a thing of chances, preposterously unable to find the will to realise even the most timid of its dreams. And I wondered if always it would be so, if man was a doomed animal who would never to the last days of his time take hold of fate and change it to his will. Always, it may be, he will remain kindly but jealous, desirous but discursive, able and unwisely impulsive, until Saturn who begot him shall devour him in his turn. . . .

"I was roused from these thoughts by the sudden realisation of the presence of a squadron of aeroplanes far away to the north-east and very high. They looked like little black dashes against the midnight blue. I remember that I looked up at them at first rather idly—as one might notice a flight of birds. Then I perceived that they were only the extreme wing of a great fleet that was advancing in a long line very swiftly from the direction of the frontier, and my attention tightened.

"Directly I saw that fleet I was astonished not to have seen it before.

"I stood up softly, undesirous of disturbing my companions, but with my heart beating now rather more rapidly with surprise and excitement. I strained my ears for any

sound of guns along our front. Almost instinctively I turned about for protection to the south and west, and peered; and then I saw coming as fast and much nearer to me, as if they had sprung out of the darkness, three banks of aeroplanes; a group of squadrons very high, a main body at a height perhaps of one or two thousand feet, and a doubtful number flying low and very indistinct. The middle ones were so thick they kept putting out groups of stars. And I realised that, after all, there was to be fighting in the air.

"There was something extraordinarily strange in this swift, noiseless convergence of nearly invisible combatants above the sleeping hosts. Everyone about me was still unconscious; there was no sign as yet of any agitation among the shipping on the main canal, whose whole course, dotted with unsuspicious lights and fringed with fires, must have been clearly perceptible from above. Then a long way off towards Alkmaar I heard bugles, and after that shots, and then a wild clamour of bells. I determined to let my men sleep on for as long as they could. . . .

"The battle was joined with the swiftness of dreaming. I do not think it can have been five minutes from the moment when I first became aware of the Central European air fleet to the contact of the two forces. I saw it quite plainly in silhouette against the luminous blue of the northern sky. The allied aeroplanes—they were mostly French—came pouring down like a fierce shower upon the middle of the Central European fleet. They looked exactly like a coarser sort of rain. There was a crackling sound—the first sound I heard—it reminded one of the Aurora Borealis, and I suppose it was an interchange of rifle shots. There were flashes like summer lightning; and then all the sky became a whirling confusion of battle that was still largely noiseless. Some of the Central European aeroplanes were certainly charged and overset; others seemed to collapse and fall and then flare out with so bright a light that it took the edge off one's vision and made the rest of the battle disappear as though it had been snatched back out of sight.

"And then, while I still peered and tried to shade these flames from my eyes with my hand, and while the men about me were beginning to stir, the atomic bombs were

thrown at the dykes. They made a mighty thunder in the air, and fell like Lucifer in the picture, leaving a flaring trail in the sky. The night, which had been pellucid and detailed and eventful, seemed to vanish, to be replaced abruptly by a black background to these tremendous pillars of fire. . . .

"Hard upon the sound of them came a roaring wind, and the sky was filled with flickering lightnings and rushing clouds. . . .

"There was something discontinuous in this impact. At one moment I was a lonely watcher in a sleeping world; the next saw everyone about me afoot, the whole world awake and amazed. . . .

"And then the wind had struck me a buffet, taken my helmet and swept aside the summerhouse of *Vreugde bij Vrede*, as a scythe sweeps away grass. I saw the bombs fall, and then watched a great crimson flare leap responsive to each impact, and mountainous masses of red-lit steam and flying fragments clamber up towards the zenith. Against the glare I saw the countryside for miles standing black and clear, churches, trees, chimneys. And suddenly I understood. The Central Europeans had burst the dykes. Those flares meant the bursting of the dykes, and in a little while the sea-water would be upon us. . . ."

He goes on to tell with a certain prolixity of the steps he took,—and all things considered they were very intelligent steps—to meet this amazing crisis. He got his men aboard and hailed the adjacent barges; he got the man who acted as barge engineer at his post and the engines working, he cast loose from his moorings. Then he bethought himself of food and contrived to land five men, get in a few dozen cheeses and ship his men again before the inundation reached them.

He is reasonably proud of this piece of coolness. His idea was to take the wave head-on and with his engines full speed ahead. And all the while he was thanking heaven he was not in the jam of traffic in the main canal. He rather, I think, over-estimated the probable rush of waters; he dreaded being swept away, he explains, and smashed against houses and trees.

He does not give any estimate of the time it took between the bursting of the dyke and the arrival of the

waters, but it was probably an interval of about twenty minutes or half an hour. He was working now in darkness —save for the light of his lantern—and in a great wind. He hung out head and stern lights. . . .

Whirling torrents of steam were pouring up from the advancing waters, which had rushed, it must be remembered, through nearly incandescent gaps in the sea defences, and this vast uprush of vapour soon veiled the flaring centres of explosion altogether.

"The waters came at last, an advancing cascade. It was like a broad roller sweeping across the country. They came with a deep roaring sound. I had expected a Niagara, but the total fall of the front could not have been much more than twelve feet. Our barge hesitated for a moment, took a dose over her bows, and then lifted. I signalled for full speed ahead and brought her head up stream, and held on like grim death to keep her there.

"There was a wind about as strong as the flood, and I found we were pounding against every conceivable buoyant object that had been between us and the sea. The only light in the world now came from our lamps, the steam became impenetrable at a score of yards from the boat, and the roar of the wind and water cut us off from all remoter sounds. The black shining waters swirled by, coming into the light of our lamps out of an ebony blackness and vanishing again into impenetrable black. And on the waters came shapes, came things that flashed upon us for a moment, now a half-submerged boat, now a cow, now a huge fragment of a house's timberings, now a muddle of packing-cases and scaffolding. The things clapped into sight like something shown by the opening of a shutter, and then bumped shatteringly against us or rushed by us. Once I saw very clearly a man's white face. . . . All the while a group of labouring, half-submerged trees remained ahead of us, drawing very slowly nearer. I steered a course to avoid them. They seemed to gesticulate a frantic despair against the black steam clouds behind. Once a great branch detached itself and tore shuddering by me. We did on the whole make headway. The last I saw of *Vreugde bij Vrede* before the night swallowed it, was almost dead astern of us. . . ."

(*To be continued.*)

# El Tango Argentino

By R. B. Cunninghame Graham

MOTOR-CARS swept up to the covered passage of the front door of the hotel, one of those international caravansaries that pass their clients through a sort of vulgarising process that blots out every type. It makes the Argentine, the French, the Englishman, and the American all alike before the power of wealth.

The cars surged up as silently as snow falls from a fir-tree in a thaw, and with the same soft swishing noise. Tall, liveried porters opened the doors (although, of course, each car was duly furnished with a footman) so nobly that any one of them would have graced any situation in the State.

The ladies stepped down delicately, showing a fleeting vision of a leg in a transparent stocking, just for an instant, through the slashing of their skirts. They knew that every man, their footman, driver, the giant watchers at the gate, and all who at the time were going into the hotel, saw and were moved by what they saw just for a moment; but the fact did not trouble them at all. It rather pleased them, for the most virtuous feel a pleasurable emotion when they know that they excite. So it will be for ever, for thus and not by votes alone they show that they are to the full men's equals, let the law do its worst.

Inside the hotel, heated by steam, and with an atmosphere of scent and flesh that went straight to the head just as the fumes of whisky set a drinker's nerves agog, were seated all the finest flowers of the cosmopolitan society of the French capital.

Lesbos had sent its legions, and women looked at one another appreciatively, scanning each item of their neighbours' clothes, and with their colour heightening when by chance their eyes met those of another priestess of their sect.

Rich rastaquaoures, their hats too shiny, and their boots

too tight, their coats fitting too closely, their sticks mounted with great gold knobs, walked about or sat at little tables, all talking strange varieties of French.

Americans, the men apparently all run out of the same mould, the women apt as monkeys to imitate all that they saw in dress, in fashion and in style, and more adaptable than any other women in the world from lack of all traditions, conversed in their high, nasal tones; Spanish-Americans from every one of the Republics were well represented, all talking about money: of how Doña Fulana Perez had given fifteen hundred francs for her new hat, or Don Fulana had just scored a million on the bourse.

Jews and more Jews, and Jewesses and still more Jewesses, were there, some of them married to Christians and turned Catholic, but betrayed by their Semitic type, although they talked of Lourdes, and of the Holy Father, with the best.

After the "five-o'clock" turned to a heavy meal of toast and buns, of Hugel loaf, of sandwiches, and of hot cake, the scented throng, restored by the refection after the day's hard work of shopping, of driving here and there like souls in purgatory to call on people that they detested, and other labours of a like nature, slowly adjourned to a great hall in which a band was playing. As they walked through the passages, men pressed close up to women and murmured in their ears, telling them anecdotes that made them flush and giggle as they protested in an unprotesting style. Those were the days of the first advent of the Tango Argentino, the dance that since has circled the whole world, as it were, in a movement of the hips. Ladies pronounced it charming as they half-closed their eyes and let a little shiver run across their lips. Men said it was the only dance that was worth dancing. It was so Spanish, so unconventional, and combined all the æsthetic movements of the figures on an Etruscan vase with the strange grace of the Hungarian gypsies . . . it was so, as one may say, so . . . as you may say . . . you know.

When all were seated, the band, Hungarians, of course—oh, those dear gypsies—struck out into a rhythm, half rag-time, half habanera, canaille, but sensuous, and hands involuntarily . . . even the most aristocratic hands, of ladies whose immediate progenitors had been pork-

packers in Chicago, or gambusinos who had struck it rich in Zacatecas, tapped delicately, but usually a little out of time, upon the backs of chairs.

A tall young man, looking as if he had got a holiday from a tailor's fashion plate, his hair sleek, black, and stuck down to his head with a cosmetic, his trousers so immaculately creased they seemed cut out of cardboard, led out a girl dressed in a skirt so tight that she could not have moved in it had it not been cut open to the knee.

Standing so close that one well-creased trouser leg disappeared in the tight skirt, he clasped her round the waist, holding her hand almost before her face. They twirled about, now bending low, now throwing out a leg, and then again revolving, all with a movement of the hips that seemed to blend the well-creased trouser and the half-open skirt into one inharmonious whole. The music grew more furious and the steps multiplied, till with a bound the girl threw herself for an instant into the male dancer's arms, who put her back again upon the ground with as much care as if she had been a new-laid egg, and the pair bowed and disappeared.

Discreet applause broke forth, and exclamations such as "charming," "wonderful," "what grace," "Vivent les Espagnoles," for the discriminating audience took no heed of independence days, of mere political changes and the like, and seemed to think that Buenos Aires was a part of Spain, never having heard of San Martin, Bolivar, Paez, and their fellow liberators.

Paris, London, and New York were to that fashionable crowd the world, and anything outside—except, of course, the Hungarian gypsies and the Tango dancers—barbarous and beyond the pale.

After the Tango came "La Maxixe Bresilienne," rather more languorous and more befitting to the dwellers in the tropics than was its cousin from the plains. Again the discreet applause broke out, with exclamations such as "exquisite" and "charming," that universal adjective that gives an air of being in a perpetual pastrycook's when ladies signify delight. Smiles and sly glances at their friends showed that the dancers' efforts at indecency had been appreciated.

Slowly the hall and tea-rooms of the great hotel emptied

themselves, and in the corridors and passages the smell of scent still lingered, just as stale incense lingers in a church.

Motor-cars took away the ladies and their friends, and drivers, who had shivered in the cold whilst the crowd inside sweated in the central heating, exchanged the time of day with the liveried doorkeepers, one of them asking anxiously: "Dis, Anatole, as-tu vu mes vaches?"

With the soft closing of a well-hung door the last car took its perfumed freight away, leaving upon the steps a group of men, who remained talking over or, as they would say, undressing, all the ladies who had gone.

"Argentine Tango, eh?" I thought, after my friends had left me all alone. Well, well, it has changed devilishly upon its passage overseas, even discounting the difference of the setting of the place where first I saw it danced so many years ago. So, sauntering down, I took a chair far back upon the terrace of the Café de la Paix, so that the sellers of *La Patrie* and the men who have some strange, new toy, or views of Paris in a long album like a broken concertina, should not tread upon my toes.

Over a Porto Blanc and a Brazilian cigarette, lulled by the noise of Paris and the raucous cries of the street-vendors, I fell into a doze.

Gradually the smell of petrol and of horse-dung, the two most potent perfumes in our modern life, seemed to be blown away. Dyed heads and faces scraped till they looked blue as a baboon's; young men who looked like girls, with painted faces and with mincing airs; the raddled women, ragged men, and hags huddled in knitted shawls, lame horses, and taxi-cab drivers sitting nodding on their boxes—all faded into space, and from the nothing that is the past arose another scene.

I saw myself with Witham and his brother, whose name I have forgotten, Eduardo Peña, Congreve, and Eustaquio Medina, on a small rancho in an elbow of the great River Yi. The rancho stood upon a little hill. A quarter of a mile or so away the dense and thorny monté of hard-wood trees that fringed the river seemed to roll up towards it like a sea. The house was built of yellow pine sent from the United States. The roof was shingled, and the rancho stood planked down upon the plain, looking exactly like a box. Some fifty yards away stood a thatched hut that

served as kitchen, and on its floor the cattle herders used to sleep upon their horse-gear with their feet towards the fire.

The corrals for horses and for sheep were just a little further off, and underneath a shed a horse stood saddled day in, day out, and perhaps does so yet, if the old rancho still resists the winds.

Four or five horses, saddled and bridled, stood tied to a great post, for we were just about to mount to ride a league or two to a Baile, at the house of Frutos Barragán. Just after sunset we set out, as the sweet scent that the grasses of the plains send forth after a long day of heat, perfumed the evening air.

The night was clear and starry, and above our heads was hung the Southern Cross. So bright the stars shone out that one could see almost a mile away; but yet all the perspective of the plains and woods was altered. Hillocks were sometimes undistinguishable, at other times loomed up like houses. Woods seemed to sway and heave, and by the sides of streams bunches of Pampa grass stood stark as sentinels, their feathery tufts looking like plumes upon an Indian's lance.

The horses shook their bridles with a clear, ringing sound as they stepped double, and their riders, swaying lightly in their seats, seemed to form part and parcel of the animals they rode.

Now and then little owls flew noiselessly beside us, circling above our heads, and then dropped noiselessly upon a bush. Eustaquio Medina, who knew the district as a sailor knows the seas where he was born, rode in the front of us. As his horse shied at a shadow on the grass or at the bones of some dead animal, he swung his whip round ceaselessly, until the moonlight playing on the silver-mounted stock seemed to transform it to an aureole that flickered about his head. Now and then somebody dismounted to tighten up his girth, his horse twisting and turning round uneasily the while, and, when he raised his foot towards the stirrup, starting off with a bound.

Time seemed to disappear and space be swallowed in the intoxicating gallop, so that when Eustaquio Medina paused for an instant to strike the crossing of a stream,

we felt annoyed with him, although no hound that follows a hot scent could have gone truer on his line.

Dogs barking close at hand warned us our ride was almost over, and as we galloped up a rise Eustaquio Medina pulled up and turned to us.

"There is the house," he said, "just at the bottom of the hollow, only five squares away," and as we saw the flicker of the lights, he struck his palm upon his mouth after the Indian fashion, and raised a piercing cry. Easing his hand, he drove his spurs into his horse, who started with a bound into full speed, and as he galloped down the hill we followed him, all yelling furiously.

Just at the hitching-post we drew up with a jerk, our horses snorting as they edged off sideways from the black shadow that it cast upon the ground. Horses stood about everywhere, some tied and others hobbled, and from the house there came the strains of an accordion and the tinkling of guitars.

Asking permission to dismount, we hailed the owner of the house, a tall, old Gaucho, Frutos Barragán, as he stood waiting by the door, holding a maté in his hand. He bade us welcome, telling us to tie our horses up, not too far out of sight, for, as he said, "It is not good to give facilities to rogues, if they should chance to be about."

In the low, straw-thatched rancho, with its eaves blackened by the smoke, three or four iron bowls, filled with mare's fat, and with a cotton wick that needed constant trimming, stuck upon iron cattle brands, were burning fitfully.

They cast deep shadows in the corners of the room, and when they flickered up occasionally the light fell on the dark and sun-tanned faces of the tall, wiry Gauchos and the light cotton dresses of the women as they sat with their chairs tilted up against the wall. Some thick-set Basques, an Englishman or two in riding breeches, and one or two Italians made up the company. The floor was earth stamped hard till it shone like cement, and as the Gauchos walked upon it, their heavy spurs clinked with a noise like fetters as they trailed them on the ground.

An old, blind Paraguayan played on the guitar, and a huge negro accompanied him on an accordion. Their

united efforts produced a music which certainly was vigorous enough, and now and then, one or the other of them broke into a song, high-pitched and melancholy, which, if you listened to it long enough, forced you to try to imitate its wailing melody and its strange intervals.

Fumes of tobacco and rum hung in the air, and of a strong and heady wine from Catalonia, much favoured by the ladies, which they drank from a tumbler, passing it to one another, after the fashion of a grace-cup at a City dinner, with great gravity. At last the singing ceased, and the orchestra struck up a Tango, slow, marked, and rhythmical.

Men rose and, taking off their spurs, walked gravely to the corner of the room where sat the women huddled together as if they sought protection from each other, and with a compliment led them out upon the floor. The flowing poncho and the loose chiripá, which served as trousers, swung about just as the tartans of a Highlander swings as he dances, giving an air of ease to all the movements of the Gauchos as they revolved their partners, heads peeping above their shoulders, and their hips moving to and fro.

At times they parted, and set to one another gravely, and then the man, advancing, clasped his partner round the waist and seemed to push her backwards, with her eyes half-closed and an expression of beatitude. Gravity was the keynote of the scene, and though the movements of the dance were as significant as it was possible for the dancers to achieve, the effect was graceful, and the soft, gliding motion and the waving of the parti-coloured clothes, wild and original, in the dim, flickering light.

Rum flowed during the intervals. The dancers wiped the perspiration from their brows, the men with the silk handkerchiefs they wore about their necks, the women with their sleeves. Tangos, cielitos, and pericones succeeded one another, and still the atmosphere grew thicker, and the lights seemed to flicker through a haze, as the dust rose from the mud floor. Still the old Paraguayan and the negro kept on playing with the sweat running down their faces, smoking and drinking rum in their brief intervals of rest, and when the music ceased for a moment, the wild neighing of a horse tied in the moonlight to a post, sounded

as if he called his master to come out and gallop home again.

The night wore on, and still the negro and the Paraguayan stuck at their instruments. Skirts swung and ponchos waved, whilst maté circulated amongst the older men as they stood grouped about the door.

Then came a lull, and as men whispered in their partners' ears, telling them, after the fashion of the Gauchos, that they were lovely, their hair like jet, their eyes bright as "las tres Marias," and all the compliments which in their case were stereotyped and handed down for generations, loud voices rose, and in an instant two Gauchos bounded out upon the floor.

Long silver-handled knives were in their hands, their ponchos wrapped round their left arms served them as bucklers, and as they crouched, like cats about to spring, they poured out blasphemies.

"Stop this!" cried Frutos Barragán; but even as he spoke, a knife thrust planted in the stomach stretched one upon the floor. Blood gushed out from his mouth, his belly fell like a pricked bladder, and a dark stream of blood trickled upon the ground as he lay writhing in his death agony.

The iron bowls were overturned, and in the dark girls screamed and the men crowded to the door. When they emerged into the moonlight, leaving the dying man upon the floor, the murderer was gone; and as they looked at one another there came a voice shouting out, "Adios, Barragán! Thus does Vincente Castro pay his debts when a man tries to steal his girl," and the faint footfalls of an unshod horse galloping far out upon the plain.

I started, and the waiter standing by my side said, "Eighty centimes"; and down the boulevard echoed the harsh cry, "*La Patrie*, achetez *La Patrie*," and the rolling of the cabs.

# Yeats, Lady Gregory, and Synge

[*This is a chapter in Mr. Moore's book "Vale," which will be published in the Summer.*]

By George Moore

II

It is no light diadem of praise that Yeats sets on Lady Gregory's brow; she has discovered a speech, he says, "as beautiful as that of Morris, and a living speech into the bargain; as she moved among her people she learnt to love the beautiful speech of those who think in Irish, and to understand that it is as true a dialect of English as the dialect that Burns wrote in." But when we look into the beautiful speech that Lady Gregory learnt "as she moved among her people," we find that it consists of no more than a dozen turns of speech, dropped into pages of English so ordinary, that redeemed from these phrases it might appear in any newspaper without attracting attention. And she does not seem to have inquired if the phrases she uses are merely local or part of the English language; she writes again and again a phrase which we find in *The Burial of Sir John Moore*, evidently under the impression that she is writing something extremely Irish:

> That the foe and the stranger should tread o'er his head,
> And we far away on the billow.

I remember having heard an Irish writer say that the line, "And we far away on the billow," marked that poem as having been written by an Irishman, a careless criticism, for it is certain that the turn of speech referred to is to be found in Shakespeare, in Milton, in Morris, even in Dickens. It is heard in England in everyday speech, though not so often as it is heard in Ireland, and it was a mistake on Lady Gregory's part to accept it as characteristically Irish. And her mistake shows how very little

thought she gave to the question of idiomatic speech. She writes "he, himself," instead of omitting the parasitical "he" as she might very well have done. The omission would have suggested Ireland without any violation to the English language; and her attitude towards the verb "to be" is quite unconsidered and commonplace. She does not seem to have realised that in Ireland the verb "to be" is used to imply continuous action; and it seems to me very important to have noticed that Irish English and Provincial English preserve a distinction that has disappeared from English as spoken in polite society and taught at Oxford and Cambridge. Everybody in Ireland and a great many among the English middle classes still say, "I shall be seeing So-and-so to-night and will tell him," &c., and everybody in Ireland and a great number among the English middle classes still say, "Will you be having your letters sent on," which is surely richer English than, "Will you have your letters sent on?" My parlourmaid always says, "Will you be dressing for dinner to-night?" and "Will you be wearing your silk hat to-night?" thereby distinguishing between a simple and a continuous future action. It is our parlourmaids and their likes that carry on these subtleties of tense, a much more important point than the aspiration of the letter "h." I have heard of something called Extension Lectures at Oxford and Cambridge, but without having the least notion of what is meant by extension lectures, I would suggest that some of the yeomen of Oxfordshire should be sent for to teach the professors, learned, no doubt, in the Latin and Greek languages, but who have no English.

But the efforts of the uneducated to teach the educated would be made in vain; the English language is perishing and it is natural that it should perish with the race; race and grammatical sense go together. The English have striven and done a great deal in the world; the English are a tired race, and their weariness betrays itself in the language, and the most decadent of all are the educated classes. We say in Ireland, "I am just after feeding the birds," and this is a richer phrase, faintly different from "I have just fed the birds." All these delicate shades have dropped out of modern English; they still exist in the language, but they are no longer used, they are slightly archaic to-day,

or provincial; and the source wherefrom the language is refreshed—rural English—is being destroyed by Council Schools. God help the writer who puts pen to paper in fifty years' time, for all that will be left of the language will be a dry shank-bone that has been lying a long while on the dust-heap of empire.

The difference between rural and urban speech should have been studied by Lady Gregory, but we fear she has not given a thought to it; she was just content to pepper her page with a few idiomatic turns of speech which she very often does not use correctly. "It is what I think," said Ferogain, "that it is the fire of Conaire, the High King, and I would be glad he not to be there to-night, for it would be a pity if harm would come on him or his life be shortened, for he is a branch in its blossom." To my ear—and I come from the same country as Lady Gregory—this is not living speech. What the Galway, and I may add the Mayo, peasant would say is, "And it's glad I'd be if he wasn't there to-night." We read on, and at the end of about ten lines we come upon, "What use will it be I to speak to him?" And then her pen fills up another page before she thinks it necessary to drop in, "A welcome before you," a pretty phrase which may be idiom, though I have never heard it in either Mayo or Galway. We turn the leaves and catch sight of, "And it's you have what all the men of Ulster are wanting in." If we continued a little further it is quite possible we should come upon, "And they do be saying," and "It is what I think," but we should not meet anywhere in the book an attempt to make, to mould, or to fashion a language out of the idiom of the Galway peasant. And it is astonished I am altogether that Yeats could have brought himself to compare this patch-work to the beautiful speech of Morris or of Burns, and to speak of the manuscripts that were consulted, for Lady Gregory says herself in her preface that she cannot read the manuscripts, but has translated from the French and German versions of the stories. And it is mighty hard to know how he could have reconciled himself to the adaptation of barbaric tales to the drawing-room. "She wouldn't bowdlerise the Bible in the interests of the drawing-room," he must have often said to himself, and the constant repetition of a phrase like, "And it wasn't a chair they gave him

but a stool, and it not in the corner," must have ended by boring him, for no one is so easily bored by the repetition of a phrase as Yeats; it must have been that phrase that drove him out of Coole and sent him off again in pursuit of the golden-haired Isolde, whom, perhaps, the poet missed or found in Brittany or in Passy.

And it was on one of those journeys that he discovered Synge, a man of such rough and uncultivated aspect that he looked as if he had come out of Derrinrush. He was not a peasant as Yeats first supposed, but came, like all great writers, from the middle classes; his mother had a house in Kingstown which he avoided as much as possible, and it was in the Rue d'Arras that Yeats found him, *dans une chambre meublée* on the fifth floor. He was on his way back to Ireland, and might stay at Kingstown for a while, till his next quarter's allowance came in (he had but sixty pounds a year), but as soon as he got it he would be away to the West, to the Aran Islands. Yeats gasped; and it was the romance of living half one's life in the Latin Quarter and the other half in the Aran Islands that captured Yeats's imagination. He must have lent a willing ear to Synge's tale of an unpublished manuscript, a book which he had written about the Aran Islands; but his interest in it doubtless flagged when Synge told him it was not written in peasant speech. Synge must have answered, "But peasant speech in Aran is Irish." Yeats remembered with regret that this was so, for he would have preferred Anglo-Irish; and he listened to Synge telling him that he had some colloquial knowledge of the Irish language. He had had to pick up a little Irish; life in Aran would be impossible without Irish, and Yeats awoke from his meditation.

This strange Irishman was a solitary, who only cared to talk with peasants, and was interested in things rather than ideas. In the Rue d'Arras it must have been Yeats that did all the admiration, and Synge must have been a little bored, but quite willing that Yeats should discover in him a man of genius, a strange experience for Synge, who, however convinced he was inly of his own genius, must have wondered how Yeats had divined it, for Yeats had not pretended to feel any interest in the articles on French writers that Synge had sent round to the English

Press, adding thereby sometimes a few pounds to his income, but only sometimes, for these articles were so trite that they were seldom accepted; John Eglinton confesses once a year that he could not stomach the article that Synge sent to him for publication in *Dana*; and they were so incorrectly written that Best, who knew Synge in the Rue d'Arras, tells that he used to go over them, for Synge could not write correctly at that time. Only one out of three was accepted, and the one that came to *Dana* no doubt came with all the edges worn by continual transmission through the post. It is Best that should write about Synge, for he helped him to furnish his room in the Rue d'Arras. Synge was very helpless in the actual affairs of life; he could not go out and buy furniture; Best had to go with him, and they brought home a mattress and some chairs and a bed on a barrow, and then returned to fetch the rest. There was a fiddle hanging on the wall of the garret in the Rue d'Arras, but as Synge never played it, Best began to wonder if Synge could play, and as if suspecting Best of disbelief in his music, Synge took it down one evening and drew the bow across the strings in a way that convinced Best, who played the fiddle himself; and, as if satisfied, he returned the fiddle to its nail, saying that he only played it in the Aran Islands in the evenings when the peasants wanted to dance. "They have no ear for music," he said, "and do not recognise a melody." "What!" exclaimed Best. "Well, only as they recognise the cry of a bird or animal, not as a musician." "Only the beat of the jig enters their ears," Synge replied in a voice tinged with melancholy.

In Yeats's imagination playing the fiddle to the Aran Islanders, or reciting poems to them, is one and the same thing, and he recognised instantly in Synge the Gleeman that was in himself, but had remained, and would remain for ever, unrealised; and his imagination caught fire at the conjunction of the Rue d'Arras and the Aran Islands. "Music coming to them in the springtime," he may have murmured. It was easy to imagine that Synge could draw sweet music from the fiddle on the wall; for Yeats was at that time avid of music; he had lost his flute irreparably.... Synge would play new music for him, and he would beat the time, and it would be just the music that he wanted;

his ears were weary of the three-holed Kiltartan whistle, and he forgot to ask himself if Lady Gregory would care for the richer music he was bringing back with him.

"Leave off writing articles on Anatole France, François Coppée, and Baudelaire, and come back to Ireland and write plays for me."

Whosoever has followed this narrative so far can see Yeats leaning forward in Synge's chair, getting more and more interested in him at every moment, his literary passions rising till they carried him to his feet and set him walking about the dusty carpet from the window to the table at which Synge worked, crying:

"You must make use of your Aran experiences."

"But they are written; only no one will publish my book."

"Your book is not written in the language of the peasant; I don't mean Irish, but Anglo-Irish, peasant idiom. You'll be able to translate from the Irish, and so thicken the idiom. Come to Ireland and write folk-plays for me. A play about Aran."

"But the play I've shown you——"

"Is of no account. The language will help you to know your own people."

And, better than any description, this dialogue represents the meeting of Yeats and Synge in the Rue d'Arras, Synge's large, impassive face into which hardly any light of expression ever came, listening to Yeats with a look of perplexity moving over its immobility, and Yeats's passion, purely literary, steadily mounting.

"You must come back and perfect yourself in the language. You must live among the people again," he reports himself to have said. "You must come to Ireland. A theatre is building in Dublin for the production of folk-plays."

"Building!"

"Well, it will soon be building"; and he told Synge how Miss Horniman, a lady of literary tastes and ample income, had decided to give to Dublin what no other city in an English-speaking country possessed—a subventioned theatre. "Write me an Aran play. We will open the theatre with it"; and he began to speak of Synge's immediate return.

"As soon as the summer comes again."

But that promise would not satisfy Yeats. Synge must return to Aran at once.

"I should die," Synge is reported to have answered.

"Not before you have written the masterpiece," was Yeats's answer, as related by himself; and Yeats continued day after day to subjugate Synge's mind, till one Saturday evening, after a talk lasting till long past midnight, Synge declared his adherence to the new creed.

"When a man's mind is made up, his feet must set out on the way." Yeats's own words as reported by himself. He allowed, however, Synge to wait for two little cheques which he was owed for articles, and as soon as he received them he folded his luggage according to promise, and a few days after presented himself at the Nassau Hotel, and was introduced to Lady Gregory, who, of course, perceived there was something on his mind. She encouraged him to confide in her, and he confided to her the story of his health, and she very kindly took his part against Yeats, who was all for Aran, not for the middle island, for there only Irish is spoken. "And the dialect is what we want."

"That may be, Mr. Yeats, but Mr. Synge may not be able to stand the climate in the autumn." And she turned to Synge, who told her that the best time would be a little later, when the people would be digging in their potato-fields. Lady Gregory agreed that this was so, and after some demur Yeats yielded, as he always does to Lady Gregory, and the three were of one mind that the mild climate of Wicklow was most suitable for "listening."

"The tinkers meet there in the autumn."

"You mustn't miss the gathering."

He went away next morning, and his admirers were overjoyed when he wrote to them a few days afterwards saying that he had been fortunate enough to fall in with a band of tinkers driving their shaggy ponies, bony horses, and reliable asses up a hillside, making for their annual assemblage. They were exchanging their wives and arranging the roads they were to take, the signs to be left at the cross-roads, the fairs they were to attend, and the meeting-places for the following year. He had been very lucky, for he had fallen in with the tinkers at the moment when a tall, lean man turned to run after a screaming girl.

"Black Hell to your sowl! you've followed me so far, you'll follow me to the end!" he roared, seizing her by the wrist, a girl no doubt that had yielded to the call of the vagrant and had begun to regret her comfortable stead.

Without a trull, it is true, or the desire to win or to capture one, Synge, by his harmless appearance and his fiddle, gained the good-will of the tinker and his wife, and he followed the fortune of this family, listening to their talk as they strolled along the lanes, cadging and stealing as they went, squatting at eventide on the side of a dry ditch. Like a hare in a gap he listened, and when he had mastered every turn of their speech he left the tinker and turned into the hills, spending some weeks with a cottager, joining a little later another group of tinkers, accompanied by a servant-girl who had suddenly wearied of scrubbing and mangling, boiling for pigs, cooking, and working dough, and making beds in the evening. It would be better, she had thought, to lie under the hedgerow; and in telling me of this girl, Synge seemed to be telling me his own story. He, too, disliked the regular life of his mother's house, and preferred to wander with the tinkers, and when tired of them to lie abed smoking with a peasant, and awake amid the smells of shag and potato-skins in the sieve in the corner of the room. He told me how after breakfast he scrambled over a low wall out of which grew a single hawthorn, and looked round for a place where he might loosen his strap, and when that job was done he kept on walking ahead thinking out the dialogue of his plays, modifying it at every stile after a gossip with some herdsman or pig-jobber, whomever he might meet, returning through the cold spring evening, when the stars shine brightly through the naked trees, licking his lips, appreciating the fine flavour of some drunkard's oath or blasphemy.

He extended his tour through Connaught, spending a long time in my own native town, Castlebar, where it is said he picked up no fewer than three or four turns of speech, and on his return to Dublin he had collected some hundreds in the different counties, and from different classes, and these he was able to work up together, creating what amounted practically to a small language understandable by everybody who knows English, but sufficiently far removed from ordinary speech to give his plays an air

that none others have—that air of aloofness, of art, which Yeats deems necessary, which we all deem necessary, though we differ as to how it may be obtained. Synge had done what none had done before—he had discovered that it was possible to write beautifully in peasant idiom. Everybody could write it, Lady Gregory as well as another, but no one but Synge could write beautifully in it.

Yeats was at this time in the hands of the Fays and a Committee, and the performances of the National Theatre were given in different halls; and when Synge came up from the country to read *Riders to the Sea* to the company, Yeats, who did not wish to have any misunderstanding on the subject, cried "Sophocles" across the table, and, fearing that he was not impressive enough, he said: "No, Æschylus." And that same afternoon he said to me in Grafton Street: "I would I were as sure of your future and of my own as I am of Synge's." One of those exaggerated appreciations that annoy and estrange, and when I heard this one-act play, it seemed very little more than the contents of Synge's notebook, an experiment in language rather than a work of art, a preparatory essay; he seemed to me to have contented himself with relating a painful rather than a dramatic story, his preoccupation being to discover a style, a vehicle of expression, and it was not until Synge wrote *The Well of the Saints* that I began to feel that a man of genius had been born unto Ireland.

Irishmen had written well before Synge, but they had written well by casting off Ireland; but here was a man inspired by Ireland, a country that had not inspired any art since the tenth or twelfth century, a country to which it was fatal to return. Was Synge the exception, and was he going to find his fortune in Ireland? His literary fortune, for *The Well of the Saints* emptied the Abbey Theatre. It had never been full, the audiences were scanty, the patrons of the stalls being the Yeats family, Sarah Purser, William Bailey, John Eglinton, Æ, Longworth, and dear Edward, who supported the Abbey Theatre, believing himself in duty bound to do so. He was averse from peasant plays, and *The Well of the Saints* upset him altogether. "All this sneering at Catholic practices is utterly distasteful to me. Don't think I don't see it. I understand it very well, and I can hear it all, and the whin-

ing voice of the proselytiser. I never will go against my opinions. When I hear the Sacred Name I assure you——"

"You mean the name of God, Edward, don't you?"

"I never like to mention it. The Sacred Name is sufficient."

"But if you are speaking French you say 'Mon Dieu!' at every sentence, and what isn't wrong in one language, can't be wrong in another."

A smile trickled across Edward's face, round and large and russet as a ripe pumpkin, and he muttered: "*Mon ami Moore, mon ami Moore.*"

He was in the Abbey the first night of *The Playboy*, and on my return from Paris he told me that, though the noise was great, he had heard enough blasphemy to keep him out of the theatre from thenceforth, and next morning he had read in the papers that Ireland had been exhibited in a shameful light as an immoral country.

"And oddly enough, the scene of the immorality is your own native town, George."

He told me that the hooting had begun about the middle of the third act at the words: "If all the women of Mayo were standing before me, and they in their——" He shrank from completing the sentence, and muttered something about the evocation of a disgusting spectacle.

"I agree with you, Edward, that shift evokes a picture of blay calico; but the delightful underwear of Madame—"

"Now, George."

And then, amused at his own folly, which he can no more overcome than anybody else, he began to laugh, shaking like a jelly, puffing solemnly all the while at his churchwarden.

"The indignation was so great that I thought sometimes the pit was going to break in. 'Lower the bloody curtain, and give us something we bloody well want,' a well-filled pit kept on shouting." And looking at Edward I imagined I could see him in the stalls near the stage, turning round in terror, his face growing purpler and purpler. "All the same," he said, "though the pain that Synge's irreverent remarks caused me is very great, I disapprove altogether of interrupting a performance. But Yeats shouldn't have called in the police. A Nationalist should never call for the police."

"But, Edward, supposing a housebreaker forces his way in here or into Tillyra?"

He said that that was different, and after wasting some time in discussion regarding the liberty of speech and the rights of property, he asked me if I had read the play, and I told him that on reading about the tumult in the Abbey Theatre I had telegraphed from Paris for a copy, and that the first lines convinced me that Ireland had at last begotten a masterpiece—the first lines of Pegeen Mike's letter to Mr. Michael O'Flaherty, general dealer, in Castlebar, for six yards of stuff for to make a yellow gown, a pair of boots with lengthy heels on them and brassy eyes, a hat is suited for a wedding day, a fine-tooth comb. "Never was there such a picture of peasant life in a few lines"; and at every sentence my admiration increased. At the end of the act I cried out: "A masterpiece! a masterpiece! of course, they were insulted." The girls coming in with presents for the young stranger pleased me, but a cold wind of doubt seemed to blow over the pages when the father came on the stage, a bloody bandage about his head, and—"Edward—you're asleep!"

"No, I'm listening."

"So clearly did I see disaster in that bloody bandage that I could hardly read through the third act. But you see nothing in the play."

"Yes, I do, only it's a little thing. Shawn Keogh is a very good character, and the Widow Quinn is not bad either."

"But the language, Edward."

"You have made up your mind that this play is a masterpiece, but I am not going to give in to you."

"But the style, Edward."

"It isn't English. I like the Irish language and the English language, but I don't like the mixture"; and then puffing at his pipe for a few seconds he said, "I like the intellectual drama."

The conversation turned upon Ibsen, and we talked pleasantly until one in the morning, and then bidding him good-night I returned to Ely Place, delighted at my own perspicacity, for there could be no doubt that it was the bloody bandage that caused the row in the Abbey Theatre.

"The author and Yeats expect too much from the

audience; the language is beautiful, but——" I had admitted to Edward that I had only glanced through the third act, and Edward had answered, "If you had read the whole of it you might be of my opinion." It wasn't likely that Edward and I should agree about the *Playboy*, but it might well be that I was judging it hurriedly, and it would have been wiser, I reflected, to have read the play through before attempting to explain why the humour of the audience had changed suddenly, and I resolved to read the play next morning. But my dislike of reading is so great that I missed it, and when Yeats came to see me, instead of the praise which he had come to hear, and which he was craving for, he heard some rather vain dissertations and only half-hearted praise. Again my impulsiveness was my ruin. The play would have been understood if it had been read carefully, and the evening would have been one of exaltation, whereas it went by mournfully, Yeats in the chimney-corner listening to suggestions that would preserve the comedy note. He went away depressed, saying, however, that it would be as well that I should write to Synge about his play, since I liked the greater part. But he did not think that Synge would make any alterations. And the letter I sent to Synge was superficial. I hope he destroyed it. He was glad that his play had pleased me, but he could not alter the third act. It had been written again and again—thirteen times. That is all I remember of his letter, interesting on account of the circumstances in which it was written and the rarity of Synge's correspondence. It is a pity his letter was destroyed and no copy kept; our letters would illuminate the page that I am now writing, exhibiting us both in our weakness and our strength—Synge in his strength, for if the play had been altered we should have all been disgraced, and it was Yeats's courage that saved us in Dublin. He did not argue, he piled affirmation upon affirmation, and he succeeded in the end . . . but we will not anticipate.

But if Dublin would not listen to the *Playboy*, Dublin read the text; edition after edition was published, and we talked the *Playboy* round out firesides. How we talked! Week after week, month after month. the Abbey Theatre declining all the while, till at last the brothers Fay rose in revolt against Yeats's management, accusing him of hinder-

ing the dramatic movement by producing no plays except those written by his intimate friends. Yeats repelled the accusation by offering to submit those that he had rejected to the judgment of Professor Tyrrell, a quite unnecessary concession on the part of Yeats, for Willie Fay is but an amusing Irish comedian, and it was presumptuous for him and his brother to set themselves against a poet. They resigned, and one night Yeats came to me with the grave news that the Fays had seceded.

"I feel I must talk to somebody," he said, flinging himself into a chair.

Æ is the only man who can distribute courage, but Yeats and Æ were no longer friends, and I was but a poor purveyor. It is true that I told him, and without hesitation, that the secession of the Fays was a blessing in disguise, and that now he was master in his own house the Abbey Theatre would begin to flourish, and it would have been well if I had confined myself to pleasant prophesying; but very few can resist the temptation to give good advice.

"One thing, Yeats, I have always had in mind, but never liked to tell you; it is that the way you come down the steps from the stage and stride up the stalls and alight by Lady Gregory irritates the audience, and if you will allow me to be perfectly frank, I will tell you that she is a little too imposing, too suggestive of Corinne or Madame de Stael. Corinne and Madame de Stael were one and the same person, weren't they? But you don't know, Yeats, do you?"

And so I went on pulling the cord, letting down volumes of water upon poor Yeats, who crouched and shivered. The water, always cold, was at times very icy, for instance when I said that his dreams of reviving Jonson's *Volpone* must be abandoned.

"If you aren't very careful, Yeats, the Academic idea will overgrow the folk." And Yeats went away overwhelmed, and I saw no more of him for many months, not until it became known that Synge's persistent ill-health had at last brought him to a private hospital, where he lay waiting an operation. "He lives by the surgeon's knife," Yeats said to me, and I welcomed his advice to save myself from the anguish of going to see a man dying of cancer. And while Synge perished slowly, Gogarty recovered in the same

hospital after an operation for appendicitis. One man's scale drops while another's goes up. As I write this line I can see Synge, whom I shall never see again with my physical eyes, sitting thick and straight in my armchair, his large, uncouth head, and flat, ashen-coloured face with two brown eyes looking at me, not unsympathetically. A thick, stubbly growth of hair starts out of a strip of forehead like black twigs out of the head of a broom. I see a ragged moustache, and he sits bolt upright in my chair, his legs crossed, his great country shoe spreading over the carpet. The conversation about us is of literature, but he looks as bored as Jack Yeats does in the National Gallery. . . . Synge and Jack Yeats are like each other in this, neither takes the slightest interest in anything except life, and in their own deductions from life; educated men, both of them, but without æsthetics, and Yeats's stories that Synge read the classics and was a close student of Racine is a piece of Yeats's own academic mind. Synge did not read Racine oftener than Jack Yeats looks at Titian, and no conclusion should be drawn from the fact that among his scraps of verse are to be found translations from Villon and Marot; they are merely exercises in versification; he was curious to see if Anglo-Irish idiom could be used in poetry; Villon wrote largely in the slang of his time, therefore Villon was selected; and whosoever reads Villon dips into Marot and reads *Une ballade à double refrain.* And that is all, for, despite his beautiful name, Marot is an insipid poet. I am sorry that Yeats fell into the mistake of attributing much reading to Synge; he has little love of character and could not keep himself from putting rouge on Synge's face and touching up his eyebrows. He showed greater discrimination when he said, "You will never know as much about French poetry as Arthur Symons. Come to Ireland and write plays for me." And for his great instinct we must forgive him his little sins of reason. He very rightly speaks of Synge as a solitary, and it is interesting to speculate what made him a solitary. Was it the sense that death was lurking round the corner always, and the sense that he possessed no social gifts that helped to drive him out into the Aran Islands, where he knew nobody, and to the Latin Quarter behind the Luxembourg Gardens, where nobody knew him? A man soon perceives if he be interested in

others and if others be interested in him, and if he contribute nothing and get nothing, he will slink away as Synge did.

Yeats had called him out of obscurity for a little while, and now he was to pass from us into the night that never melts into dawn, unless glory be the dead man's dawn. It seemed a cruel fate that decreed that Synge must die before his play could be revived in Dublin, but his fate was cruel from the beginning. Yeats tells me that these lines were found among his papers: "I am five-and-twenty to-day; I wonder will the five-and-twenty years before me be as unhappy as those I have passed through." And well might he have doubted that his middle life would be less unpleasant. He received Yeats's belief in his genius, and that was all. He wrote but little, but that little was his own: *Mon verre est petit mais je bois dans mon verre.* His last strength he reserved for *Deirdre*, working at the play whenever he could, determined to finish it before he died. But he wrote slowly, and the disease moved quickly from cell to cell, and before the last writing was accomplished Synge laid aside the pen and resigned himself to death. It is curious that he should have met his old friend Best on his way to the hospital. Best tells these things significantly. He asked Synge if he were going in for an operation. Synge answered no; and when Best called to see him in the hospital, he found Synge clinging to a little hope, though he knew there was none, saying that people often got better when nobody expected them to get better; and he seemed to experience some disappointment when Best did not answer promptly that that was so.

He used to speak of *Deirdre* as his last disappointment; but another awaited him. An hour before he died he asked the nurse to wheel his bed into a room whence he could see the Wicklow mountains, the hills where he used to go for long solitary walks, and he was wheeled into the room, but the mountains could not be seen from the windows; to see them it was necessary to stand up, and Synge could not stand or sit up in his bed, so his last wish remained ungratified, and he died with tears in his eyes.

# The Angel of Manfredonia

By Norman Douglas

THE old sea-port of Manfredonia is a slumberous place. There are no amusements in the town; no interesting walks in its neighbourhood. The hills are three miles distant from the shore, and the intervening region is a plain of rock carved so smoothly, in places, as to appear artificially levelled with the chisel; large tracts of it are decked with the Indian fig (cactus). In the shade of these grotesque growths lives a dainty flora: trembling grasses of many kinds, rue, asphodel, thyme, the wild asparagus, pink convolvulus, a diminutive blue iris, as well as patches of saxifrage that embellish the stone with a brilliant enamel of red and gold. This wild beauty makes one think how much better the graceful wrought-iron balconies of the town would look if enlivened with blossoms, with pendent carnations or pelargonium; but there is no great display of these things; the deficiency of water is a characteristic of the place; it is a flowerless and songless city. And the mass of the country people have small charm of feature. Their faces seem to have been chopped with a hatchet into masks of sombre virility; a hard life amid burning limestone deserts is figured in their countenances.

None the less, they possess a public garden whose situation, covering a forlorn semi-circular piece of ground about the old Anjou castle, is *a priori* a good one. But once the trees are fully grown, it will be impossible to see this fine ruin save at quite close quarters—just across the moat.

I lamented this fact to a solitary gentleman who was strolling about here, and who replied, upon due reflection:

"One cannot have everything."

Then he added, as a suggestive afterthought:

"Inasmuch as one thing sometimes excludes another."

I pause, to observe parenthetically that this habit of

uttering platitudes in the grand manner as though disclosing an idea of vital novelty (which Charles Lamb, poor fellow, thought peculiar to natives of Scotland) is as common among Italians as among Englishmen. But veiled in sonorous Latinisms, the staleness of such remarks assumes an air of profundity.

"For my part," he went on, warming to his theme, "I am thoroughly satisfied. Who will complain of the trees? Only a few makers of bad pictures. They can go elsewhere. Our country, dear sir, is *encrusted* with old castles and other feudal absurdities."

Wandering about the upper regions of this fortress, I espied a good pre-Renaissance relief of Saint Michael immured into the masonry, and overhung by the green leaves of an exuberant wild fig that has thrust its roots into the sturdy old walls. Here, at Manfredonia, we are already under the shadow of the holy mountain and the archangel's wings; but the usual representations of him are childishly emasculate—the negation of his divine and heroic character. This one portrays a genuine warrior-angel, grave and grim.

Along the streets little red flags are hanging out of the houses at frequent intervals: signals of harbourage for the parched wayfarer. Within, you behold a picturesque confusion of rude chairs set among barrels and vats full of dark red wine, where, amid Rembrandtesque comrades, you may get as drunk as a lord for sixpence. Blithe oases! It must be delightful, in summer, to while away the sultry hours in their hospitable twilight; even at this season they seem to be extremely popular resorts, throwing a new light on those allusions by classical authors to "thirsty Apulia."

But on many of the dwellings you will notice another symbol—an ominous blue metal tablet with a red cross, bearing the white-lettered words VIGILANZA NOTTURNA. Was it some anti-burglary association? I inquired of a serious-looking individual who happened to be passing.

His answer did not help to clear up matters.

"A pure job, *signore mio*, a pure job! There is a society in Cerignola or somewhere, a society which persuades the various town councils—persuades them, you understand—per-suades them——"

He ended abruptly, with the gesture of paying out money between his finger and thumb. Then he sadly shook his head.

I sought for more light on this cryptic utterance; in vain. The mystery grew ever darker. After heaving a deep sigh, he condescended to remark:

"The old, old camorra! Eat—eat; from father to son. Eat—eat. That's all they think about, the brood of assassins. . . . Just look at them!"

I glanced down the street, and beheld a venerable gentleman of kindly aspect, who approached slowly, leaning on the arm of a fair-haired youth—his grandson, I supposed. He wore a long white beard, and an air of apostolic detachment from the affairs of this world. They came nearer. The boy was listening, deferentially, to some remark of the elder; his lips were parted in attention, and his candid, sunny face would have rejoiced the heart of della Robbia. They passed within a few feet of me, lovingly engrossed in one another.

"Well?" I queried, turning to my informant and anxious to learn what misdeeds could be laid to the charge of such godlike types of humanity.

But that person was no longer at my side. He had quietly withdrawn himself in the interval; he had evanesced, "moved on." *Non est inventus.*

An oracular and elusive citizen. . . .

The spur of Italy, that Gargano promontory at whose feet Manfredonia lies, is besprinkled with Greek names—Mathew, Mark, Nikander, Onofrius, Pirgiano (Pyrgos), and so forth. Small wonder, for these regions were in touch with Constantinople in olden times, and the spirit of Byzance still hovers over them. It was on this mountain that the archangel Michael, during his first flight to western Europe, deigned to appear to the Greek bishop Laurentius of Sipontum; and ever since those days a certain cavern, sanctified by the presence of this winged messenger of God, has been the goal of millions of pilgrims. The fastness of Santangelo, metropolis of European angel-worship, has grown up around this "devout and honourable cave"; on sunny days its houses are clearly visible from Manfredonia.

Vainly I waited for fine weather to ascend the heights. Scirocco, the pest of the south, blew incessantly, obscuring the sea's horizon and the coastlands of Apulia with its tepid and unwholesome breath. In despair, I at last summoned a coachman and entered upon negotiations for starting next morning, be the weather what it might.

Sixty-five francs, he began by telling me, was the price paid by an Englishman last year for a day's visit to the sacred mountain. It may well be true—foreigners will do anything, in Italy. Or perhaps it was only said to "encourage" me. But I am rather hard to encourage nowadays. I reminded the man that there was a diligence-service there and back for a franc and a half, and even that figure seemed rather extortionate. I had seen so many holy grottoes, in my life! And who, after all, was this Saint Michael? The Eternal Father, perchance? Just an ordinary angel! We had dozens of them, in England. Fortunately, I added, I had already received an offer to join one of the private parties who drive up, ten to fifteen persons behind one microscopic pony—and that, as he well knew, would be a matter of only a few pence. And even then, the threatening sky. . . . Yes, on second thoughts, it was perhaps wisest to postpone the excursion altogether. Another day, if God wills! Would he accept this cigar, as a recompense for his trouble in coming?

In dizzy leaps and bounds, his claims fell to eight francs. It was the tobacco that worked the wonder; a gentleman who will give *something for nothing* (such was his logic): well, you never know what you may not get out of him. Agree to his price, and chance it!

He consigned the cigar to his waistcoat pocket to smoke after dinner, and departed—vanquished, but inwardly beaming with bright anticipation.

A wretched morning was disclosed as I drew open the shutters, the sun appearing in visions of tantalising briefness, only to be swallowed up once more in pallid scirocco-murk. No matter: the carriage stood below, and soon we began the weary ascent of 800 metres. As we climbed up the twenty-one windings of the new carriage-road that intersects the time-honoured stony track of past days, I tried to picture to myself the Norman princes, the popes, emperors, and other

pilgrims of celebrity crawling up these rocky slopes —barefoot—on such a day as this. It would have tried the patience even of Saint Francis of Assisi, who pilgrimaged with the rest of them and, according to Pontanus, performed a little miracle *en passant*, as was his wont.

It was so cold at Santangelo that, acting on the advice of the coachman, I at once descended into the sanctuary; it would be warm down there, he thought. Having entered the portal, you climb down a long stairway amid swarms of pious, foul-clustering beggars to a vast cavern, the abode of the archangel. It is a natural recess in the mountain, illuminated by candles. Here divine service is proceeding to the accompaniment of cheerful operatic airs from an asthmatic organ; the water drops ceaselessly from the vault on to the devout heads of kneeling worshippers that cover the floor, lighted candle in hand, rocking themselves ecstatically and droning and chanting. A weird scene, in truth. Picturesquely pagan they looked, these pilgrims, in grimy, tattered garments—their staves tipped with pine-branches and a script. And the driver was quite right in his surmise as to the difference in temperature. It is hot down here—damply-hot as in an orchid-house. But the aroma cannot be described as a floral emanation: it is the *bouquet*, rather, of thirteen centuries of unwashed and perspiring Abruzzi peasants. TERRIBILIS EST LOCUS ISTE, says an inscription at the entrance of the shrine. Very true. In places like this one understands the uses, and possibly the origin, of incense.

Then the grovelling herd was left behind. Profiting by a gleam of sunshine, I climbed up to where, above the town, there stands a proud aerial ruin known as the "Castle of the Giant." On one of its stones is engraved the date 1491; a certain Queen of Naples, they say, was murdered within those now crumbling walls. These sovereigns were murdered in so many castles that one wonders how they ever found time to be alive at all. The structure is a wreck and its gateway closed up; nor did I feel any great inclination, in that icy blast of wind, to explore the roofless interior. I was able to observe, however, that this "feudal absurdity" bears a number like any inhabited house of Santangelo—it is No. 3.

This is the latest pastime of the Italian Government:

to re-number dwellings throughout the kingdom; and not only human habitations, but walls, old ruins, stables, churches, as well as an occasional door-post and window. They are having no end of fun over the game, which promises to keep them amused for any length of time—in fact, until the next craze is invented. Meanwhile, so long as the fit lasts, half a million bright-eyed officials, burning with youthful ardour, are employed in affixing these new numerals, briskly entering them into ten times as many note-books and registering them into thousands of municipal archives all over the country, for some inscrutable but hugely important administrative purposes. "We have the employés," as a Roman deputy once told me, "and therefore: they must find some occupation."

Soon the rain fell once more, and drove me to seek refuge among the houses, where I glimpsed the familiar figure of my coachman, sitting disconsolately under a porch. He looked up and remarked (for want of something better to say) that he had been searching for me all over the town, fearing that some mischief might have happened to me. I was touched by these words; touched, that is, by his child-like simplicity in imagining that he could bring me to believe a statement of such radiant improbability; so touched, that I pressed a franc into his reluctant palm and bade him buy with it something to eat. A whole franc. . . . *Aha!* he doubtless thought, *my theory of the gentleman: it begins to work.*

It was barely midday. Yet I was already surfeited with the angelic metropolis, and my desires began to turn in the direction of Manfredonia once more. At a corner of the street, however, certain fluent vociferations in English and Italian, which nothing would induce me to set down here, assailed my ears, coming up—apparently—out of the bowels of the earth. I stopped to listen, shocked at hearing ribald language in a holy town like this; then, impelled by curiosity, descended a long flight of steps and found myself in a subterranean wine-cellar. There was drinking and card-playing going on here among a party of emigrants—merry souls; a good half of them spoke English, and, despite certain irreverent phrases, they quickly won my heart with a "Here! You drink *this*, mister."

This dim recess was an instructive pendant to the archangel's cavern. A new type of pilgrim has been evolved; pilgrims who think no more of crossing to Pittsburg than of a drive to Manfredonia. But their cave was permeated with an odour of spilt wine and tobacco-smoke instead of the subtle *Essence des pélerins des Abruzzes fleuris*, and, alas! the object of their worship was not the Chaldean angel, but another and equally ancient Eastern shape: Mammon. They talked much of dollars; and I also heard several unorthodox allusions to the "angel-business," which was described as "played out," as well as a remark to the effect that "only dam fools stay in this country." In short, these men were at the other end of the human scale; they were the strong, the energetic; the ruthless, perhaps; but certainly—the intelligent.

And all the time the cup circled round with genial iteration, and it was universally agreed that, whatever the drawbacks of Santangelo, there was nothing to be said against its native liquor.

It was, indeed, a delicious product; a *vino di montagna* of noble pedigree. So I thought, as I laboriously scrambled up the stairs once more, solaced by this incident of the competition-grotto and slightly giddy, from the tobacco-smoke. And here, leaning against the door-post, stood the coachman, who had divined my whereabouts by some dark masonic intuition of sympathy. His face expanded into an inept smile, and I quickly saw that instead of fortifying his constitution with good food, he had tried alcoholic methods of defence against the inclement weather. Just a glass of wine, he explained. "But," he added, "the horse is perfectly sober."

That quadruped was equal to the emergency. Gloriously indifferent to our fates, we glided down, in a vertiginous but masterly vol-plane, from the somewhat objectionable mountain-town. An approving burst of sunshine greeted our arrival on the plain. . . .

Why has the exalted archangel chosen for an abode this reeking cell, rather than some well-built temple in the sunshine? "As symbolising a ray of light that penetrates into the gloom": so they will tell you. I rather think that he entered it as an extirpating warrior, to oust that

heathen shape which Strabo describes as dwelling in its dank recesses, and to take possession of the cleft in the name of Christianity. Santangelo is one of the many places where Michael has performed this duty of Christian Hercules, cleanser of Augean Stables. For the rest, this cave-worship is older than any god or devil. It is the cult of the feminine principle—a relic of that aboriginal obsession of mankind to shelter in some Cloven Rock of Ages, in the sacred and friendly womb of Mother Earth who gives us food and receives us after death. Grotto-apparitions, old and new, are but the popular explanations of this hazy primordial yearning.

The statuette of the archangel preserved in this underground chapel is a work of the late Renaissance. Though savouring of that mawkish elaboration which then began to infect local taste and is bound up with the name of the poet Marino, it is still a passably virile representation. But those countless others, in churches or over house-doors—do they indeed portray the dragon-killer, the martial prince of angels? This amiable child with girlish features—can this be the Lucifer of Christianity, the Sword of the Almighty? *Quis ut Deus!* He could hardly hurt a fly.

The hoary winged genius of Chaldea who has absorbed the essence of so many solemn deities has now, in extreme old age, entered upon a second childhood and grown altogether too youthful for his *rôle*, undergoing a metamorphosis beyond the boundaries of legendary probability or common sense: every trace of divinity and manly strength has been boiled out of him. The gods, they say, are ever young; and a certain sensuous and fleshly note is essential to those of Italy, if they are to retain the love of their worshippers. Granted. We do not need a scarred and hirsute veteran; but we need, at least, a personage capable of wielding the sword. No warrior, this! *C'est beau, mais ce n'est pas la guerre.*

But how should a sublime conception like the apocalyptic hero appeal to the common herd? These formidable shapes emerge from the dusk, offspring of momentous epochs; they stand aloof at first, but presently their luminous grandeur is dulled, their haughty contours sullied and obliterated by attrition. They are dragged

down to the level of their lowest adorers, for the whole flock adapts its pace to that of the weakest lamb. No self-respecting deity will endure this treatment—to be popularised and made intelligible to a crowd; it is not giving gods a chance, to interpret them in an incongruous and unsportsmanlike fashion. But the vulgar have no idea of propriety or fair play; they cannot keep at the proper distance; they are forever taking liberties. And, in the end, the proudest god is forced to yield.

We see this same fatality in the very word Cherub:—how different an image does this plump and futile infant evoke to the stately Minister of the Lord, girt with a sword of flame! We see it in the Italian Madonna of whom, whatever her mental acquirements may have been, a certain gravity of demeanour is to be presupposed, and who, none the less, grows more childishly smirking every day; in her Son who—hereabouts at least—has doffed all the serious attributes of manhood and dwindled into something not much better than a doll. It was the same in days of old. Apollo (whom Saint Michael has supplanted), and Aphrodite, and Eros—they all go through a process of saccharine deterioration. Our fairest creatures, once they have passed through their meridian vigour, are liable to be assailed and undermined by an insidious diabetic tendency.

The softening of manners within historical times is partly responsible for this gradual de-masculinisation. And the art-notions of the Cinque-Cento are also to blame; indeed, so far as the angelic shapes of South Italy are concerned, the influence of the Renaissance has been quite malefic. Aliens to the soil, they were at first wholly unknown—not one is pictured in the Neapolitan catacombs. Next came the brief period of their artistic glory; then the syncretism of the Renaissance, when these winged messengers were amalgamated with pagan *amoretti* and began to flutter in foolish-baroc fashion about the Queen of Heaven, after the pattern of the disreputable little genii attendant upon some Venus of a bad school. It was a death-stroke to the pristine dignity and holiness of angels. Nowadays, we see the perversity of it all; we have come to our senses, and can appraise the much-belauded revival at its true worth; and our modern sculptors will rear you a

respectable angel, a grave adolescent, according to the best canons of taste—should you still possess the faith that once requisitioned such works of art. . . .

We travellers acquaint ourselves with the lineage of this Celestial Being, but it can hardly be supposed that the worshippers now swarming at his shrine know much of these things. How shall one discover their real feelings with regard to this great cave-saint and his life and deeds?

Well, some idea of this may be gathered from the literature sold on the spot. I purchased three of these modern tracts. One of them contains a litany in which the titles of the archangel are enumerated—he is, among other things, Secretary of God, Liberator from Infernal Chains, Defender in the hour of Death, Custodian of the Pope, Spirit of Light, Wisest of Magistrates, Terror of Demons, Commander-in-Chief of the armies of the Lord, Lash of Heresies, Adorer of the Word Incarnate, Guide of Pilgrims, Conductor of Mortals —Mars, Mercury, Hercules, Apollo, Mithra:—what nobler ancestry can angel desire? And yet, as if these complicated and responsible functions did not suffice for his energies, he has twenty others, among them being that of "Custodian of the Holy Family"—who apparently need a protector, a Monsieur Paoli, like any mortal royalties.

Blasphemous balderdash, I can hear some Methodist exclaiming. And one may well be tempted to sneer at those pilgrims for the more enlightened of whom such stuff is printed. For they are unquestionably a repulsive crowd: travel-stained old women, understudies for the Witch of Endor; dishevelled, anæmic, and dazed-looking girls; boys, too weak to handle a spade at home, pathetically uncouth, with mouths agape and eyes expressing every grade of ill-regulated emotion—from wildest joy to downright cretinism. How one realises, down in this cavern, the effect upon some cultured ancient like Rutilius Namatianus of the catacomb-worship among those early converts, those *men who shun the light*, drawn as they were from the same social classes towards the same dark underground rites! One can neither love nor respect such people; and to affect pity for them would be more consonant with their religion than with my own.

But it is perfectly easy to understand them. For thirteen centuries this pilgrim-movement has been going on. Thirteen centuries? No! This site was an oracle in heathen days, and we know that such were frequented by crowds not a whit less barbarous and bigoted than their modern representatives. For thirty centuries then, let us say, a deity has attracted the faithful to his shrine—Sant-angelo has become a vacuum, as it were, which must be periodically filled up from the surrounding country. These pilgrimages are in the blood of the people; infants, they are carried there; adults, they carry their own offspring; grey-beards, their tottering steps are still supported by sturdier fellow-wanderers.

Popes and emperors no longer scramble up these slopes; the spirit of piety has abated among the great ones of the earth; so much is certain. But the rays that strike the topmost branches have not penetrated to the rank and seething undergrowth. And then—what else can one offer to these Abruzzi mountain-folk? Their life is one of miserable, revolting destitution. They have no games or sports, no local racing, clubs, cattle-shows, fox-hunting, politics, rat-catching, or any other of those pleasures that diversify the lives of our peasantry. No touch of humanity reaches them, no kindly dames send them jellies or blankets, no cheery doctor inquires after their children; they read no newspapers or books, and lack even the mild excitements of church *versus* chapel, or the vicar's daughter's love-affair, or the squire's latest row with his lady—nothing! Their existence is almost bestial in its blankness. I know them—I have lived among them. For four months in the year they are cooped up in damp dens, not to be called chambers, where an Englishman would deem it infamous to keep a dog—cooped up amid squalor that must be seen to be believed; for the remaining time they struggle, in the sweat of their brow, to wrest a few blades of corn from the ungrateful limestone. These visits to the archangel—these vernal and autumnal picnics —are their sole form of amusement.

And here they kneel, candle in hand, on the wet flags of this fetid and malodorous cave, gazing in rapture upon the blandly beaming idol, their sensibilities tickled by resplendent priests reciting full-mouthed Latin phrases,

while the organ overhead plays wheezy extracts from "La Forza del Destino" or the Waltz out of Boito's "Mefistofele" . . . for sure, it must be a foretaste of Heaven! And likely enough these are the poor in heart for whom that kingdom is reserved.

One may call this a debased form of Christianity: debased or not, it is alive and palpitating. But the archangel, as was inevitable, has suffered a sad change. His highest attribute of Lightbringer, of Apollo, is no longer his own; it has been claimed and appropriated by the "Light of the World," his new master. One by one, his functions have been stripped from him, all save in name, as happens to men and angels alike when they take service under "jealous" lords.

What is now left of Saint Michael, the glittering hierarch? Can he still endure the light of sun? Or has he not shrivelled into a spectral Hermes, a mere psychopomp, bowing his head in minished glory and leading men's souls no longer aloft but downwards—down to the pale regions of things that have been? And will it be long ere he, too, is thrust by some flaming Demogorgon into these same realms of Minos, into that shadowy underworld where dwell Saturn, and Kronos, and other cracked and shivered ideals?

So I mused that afternoon, driving down the slopes from Santangelo comfortably sheltered against the storm, while the generous mountain-wine sped through my veins, warming my fancy. Then, at last, the sun came out in a sudden burst of light, opening a rift in the vapours and revealing the whole chain of the Apennines, together with the peaked crater of Mount Vulture. . . .

The spectacle cheered me, and led me to think that such a day might worthily be rounded off by a visit to Sipontum, which lies a few miles beyond Manfredonia. But I approached the subject cautiously, fearing that the coachman might demur at this extra work. Far from it! I had gained his affection, and he would conduct me whithersoever I liked. Only to Sipontum? Why not to Foggia, to Naples, to the ends of the earth? As for the horse, he was none the worse for the trip, not a bit the worse; he liked nothing better than running

in front of a carriage; besides, *è suo dovere*—it was his duty.

Sipontum is so ancient that it was founded, they say, by the legendary Diomed who acted in the same capacity for certain other cities. But this record does not satisfy Monsignor Sarnelli, its historian, according to whom it was already a flourishing place when Shem, first son of Noah, became its king. He reigned about the year 1770 of the creation of the world. Two years after the deluge he was a hundred years old, and at that age begat a son Arfaxad, after whose birth he lived yet another five hundred years. The second king of Sipontum was Appulus, who ruled in the year 2213. . . . Later on, Saint Peter sojourned here, and baptised a few people.

Of Sipontum nothing is left; nothing save a church, and even that built only yesterday—in the eleventh century; a far-famed church, in the Pisan style, with wrought marble columns reposing on lions, sculptured diamond ornaments and other crafty stonework that gladdens the eye. It used to be the seat of an archbishopric, and its fine episcopal chairs are now preserved at Santangelo; and you may still do homage to the authentic Byzantine Madonna painted on wood—brown-complexioned, long-nosed, with staring eyes, and holding the Infant on her left arm. Earthquakes and Saracen invasions ruined the town, which became wholly abandoned when Manfredonia was built with its stones.

Of pagan antiquity there are a few capitals lying about, as well as granite columns in the curious old crypt. A pillar stands all forlorn in a field, and quite close to the church are erected two others—the larger of cipollino, beautified by a patina of golden lichen; a marble well-head, worn half through with usage of ropes, may be found half-buried in the rank grass. The plain whereon stood the great city of Sipus is covered, now, with bristly herbage. The sea has retired from its old beach, and half-wild cattle browse on the site of those lordly quays and palaces. Not a stone is left. Malaria and desolation reign supreme.

It is a profoundly melancholy spot. Yet I was glad of the brief vision. I shall have fond and enduring memories of that old sanctuary—the travertine of its art-

fully carven fabric glowing orange-tawny in the sunset; of the forsaken plain beyond, full of ghostly phantoms of the past.

As for Manfredonia—it is a sad little place, when the south wind moans and mountains are veiled in mists.

# The White Slave in America

By Brand Whitlock *

It is the peculiar and distinguishing feature of the reforming mind that life is presented to it in stark and rigid outline. Your true reformer is blandly unconscious of distinctions; he has no perception of proportions, no knowledge of values, in a word, no sense of humour. His world is made up of wholly unrelated antitheses. There are no shades or shadows, no gradations, no delicate and subtle relativities. A thing is either white or black, sweet or sour, good or bad. A deed is either moral or immoral, a virtue or a crime. It is all very simple. All acts of which he does not himself approve are evil; a stop must be put to them at once, and the way to do this is to have a law. Statutes are thus enacted, as the saying is, *against* all evils, large and small, and the greater the evil, of course the greater the moral triumph expressed by the mere enactment. But because of certain contrarieties in nature and a certain obstreperous quality in human nature and a general complexity in life as a whole, these legal fulminations are frequently triumphs only in theory, and in practice often intensify the very ills they seek to cure. It is just as the witty Remy de Gourmont once wrote: *Quand la morale triomphe il se passe des choses très vilaines.*

Speaking of this passion for laws and regulations and how some of the zealous would order even the most private and personal details of life in these States, Mr. Havelock Ellis, in a brilliant chapter of his work *The Task of Social Hygiene*, takes occasion to observe that "nowhere in the world is there so great an anxiety to place the moral regulation of social affairs in the hands of the police," and that "nowhere are the police more incapable of carrying out such regulation." The difficulty is due, of course, to

* Mr. Whitlock is the Mayor of Toledo, and very prominent in American public life.

the fact that the old mediæval confusion of crime and vice persists in a community where the Puritan tradition still strongly survives. The incapability, as the author quite justly points out, is not so much in the policemen as in that *bêtise humaine* which expects such superhuman work of them.

This insistent confusion of vice with crime has not only had the effect of fostering both, but is the cause of the corruption of the police. Their proper function is to protect life and property and maintain the public peace, and this the police of American cities perform as well as policemen anywhere. But when to this there is added the duty of enforcing statutes against a multitude of acts, some of which only puritanical severity classes as crimes, others of which are regarded by the human beings in the community with indifference, tolerance, or sympathy, while still others are inherent in mysterious and imperative instincts which baulk all efforts at general control, the task becomes wholly impossible and insuperable. The statutes prohibiting the merely venial of these acts oftentimes run counter to the urban custom, and the community regards it as of no great consequence if they are not enforced. Thus a wide discretion is permitted the police by the public conscience in the discharge of their duties, and this discretion is one which quite humanly they proceed to abuse. If they choose, they may enforce the sumptuary laws against certain persons, or refrain from doing so, and the opportunity for corruption is presented. The opportunity widens, opens into a larger field, and not only does the corruption spread, but it is not long before the police are employing extra-legal methods in other directions, and at last in many instances establish an actual tyranny that would not be tolerated in a monarchy. The result is that we read every day of arbitrary interferences by policemen with most of the constitutional rights, such as free speech, the right of assembly and petition, &c. They even set up a censorship and condemn paintings, or prohibit the performance of plays, or banish women from the streets because they are dressed in a style which the police do not consider *comme il faut*. And while the corruption is deplored and everywhere causes indignation and despair, this tyranny does not seem to excite resistance or even

remark; the Press, the palladium of our liberties, does not often protest against it, and no one except the late Mayor Gaynor seems to have had sufficient grasp of the principle to care anything about it.

In no respect has the utter impotence of mediæval machinery in suppressing vice been more definitely proved than in the great failure of society in dealing with what is called the social evil. Whenever my mind runs on this subject, as anyone's mind must in the present recrudescence of that puritanism which never had its mind on anything else, I invariably think of Golden Rule Jones and the incidents in that impossible warfare which worried him into a premature grave. He was an odd man, born so far out of his time that the sins of others never troubled his conscience. He was so great, and knew so much of life, more perhaps than he did of history, on every page of which he would have found the confirmations of the opinions life had taught him, that he divined all lewdness, all obscenity, to be subjective and not objective, so that he found less to abhor in the sins of the vicious than in the state of mind of their indefatigable accusers and pursuers. And he had his own way of meeting their complaints. Once a committee of ladies and gentlemen called upon him with the demand that he obliterate the social evil, off-hand and instantly. They were simple, brief, and to the point. They informed him that the laws providing for chastity were being broken, that there were prostitutes in the city, and, in short, urged him to put a stop to it.

"But what am I to do?" he inquired. "These women are here."

"Have the police," they said, a new, simple, and happy device suddenly occurring to them, "drive them out of town and close up their houses!" They sat and looked at him, triumphantly.

"But where shall I have the police drive them? Over to Detroit, or to Cleveland, or merely out into the country? They have to go *somewhere*, you know."

It was a detail that had escaped them, and presently, with his great patience, and his great sincerity, he said to them:

"I'll make you a proposition. You go and select two of the worst of these women you can find, and I'll agree

to take them into my home and provide for them until they can find some other home and some other way of making a living. And then you, each of you, take one girl into your home, under the same conditions, and together we'll try to find homes for the rest."

They looked at him, then looked at each other, and seeing how utterly hopeless this strange man was, they went away.

To be sure, that was in another day. Prostitution had not become a subject for polite conversation at the dinner-table; pornographic vice commissions had not been organised and provided with appropriations so that their hearings might be stenographically reported and published along with the filthy details gathered in the stews and slums of cities by trained smut hunters; it had not yet been discovered that the marriage ceremony required a new introduction, based upon the scientific investigations of the clinical laboratory, and on the same brilliant thought that centuries ago struck the wise men of Bohemia, who, when the population increased too rapidly, prohibited marriages for a number of years that proved of course to be the most prolific the land had ever known.

The new conception was created in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, by the necromancy of a striking phrase. I do not know who it is that had the felicity to employ it first in its present relation. I remember that long years ago, when as a boy I used to frequent the gallery of the theatre, I sat rapt afar in the mystery and old romance of life on the Mississippi when gazing on the scenes of Bartley Campbell's melodrama *The White Slave*. I can call back now, with only a little effort of the imagination and the will, that wonderful pageant—the *Natchez*, the *Robert E. Lee*, the great steamboats I knew so well from Mark Twain's book, the plantation hands, the darkies singing on the levee, the moonlight and the jasmine flower—and there was no David Belasco in those days to set the scene either, nor, for the imagination of youth, any need of one! And then the beautiful octoroon, so lily-white and fragile that it should have been patent to all, save perhaps an immoral slave-holder, from the very first scene, that she had no drop of negro blood! And the handsome and cruel owner and master,

with his slouch hat and top boots, and fierce moustache and imperial, taking her to her awful fate down the river! It was an old story Bartley Campbell used for his plot, a story which had for me an added interest, because my grandfather had told it to me out of his own southern experiences, in those far-off days when he had business that took him down the river to New Orleans. And it was a story which in many variants of its original form was told all over the land to illustrate the immorality of slavery. I suspect that it was not altogether true in its dramatic details; surely no such number of lovely and innocent creatures were permitted to fling themselves into the Mississippi from the hurricane decks of steamboats as the repetitions and variations of that tale would indicate; it would have been altogether too harrowing to the voyagers, some few of whom at least must have been virtuous, and journeyed up and down on peaceful moral missions of one sort and another. . . .

But I doubt if I could sit through any one of the plays that have been written or assuredly are being written about the "white slaves" of to-day. Already the basis is here, the plot is right at hand in the tale that has gone the rounds of two continents, and resembles that elder story so closely in its incidents of abduction that I presume the adapter of its striking title to the exigencies of current reform must have been old enough to recognise its essential similarity to the parent tradition. It has been told in books, it has served to ornament sermons and addresses on sociological subjects, and it has, I believe, already been done in novels that are among the best sellers. The newspapers have printed it with all its horrific details; it is so precisely the sort of pornography to satisfy the American sense of news—a tale of salacity for the prurient, palliated and rendered aseptic by efforts of officials, heated to the due degree of moral indignation, to bring the concupiscent to justice. I had been in England, too, when the subject was under discussion there, and this same story was told to such effect that Parliament, as hysterical as one of our own State legislatures, was induced to restore the brutality of flogging. It was always the same; some poor girl had been abducted, borne off to a brothel, ruined by men employed for that purpose, turned over to

aged satyrs, and never heard of more. Of course, there were variations; sometimes the girl was lured away in a motor-car, sometimes by a request for assistance to some lady who had fainted, sometimes by other ruses. The story was always told vehemently, but on the authority of some inaccessible third person, to doubt or question whom was to be suspected of sympathy with the outrage. But however high the station, or unimpeachable the character of the informants, anyone who had the slightest knowledge of the rules of evidence, unless he were especially credulous, would have reasons to doubt them. In Toledo it had for a while, and for aught I know still has, its vogue. It went the rounds of gentlemen's clubs and the tea-tables of the town, and in the curious way stories have, it went on and on with new embellishments at each repetition. I had a curiosity about it, not because I cared for the realistic details that might, as Pooh Bah used to say, "lend an air of artistic verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative," but because here was a chance to test it at first hand, and so I asked the person most heroically concerned to come and tell me of an experience that had earned for him the plaudits of many of his fellow citizens and citizenesses. And so he came. He was a social worker, as they are called, and had had the training in settlement work which is said to qualify young persons to deal professionally with the poor and the wicked. He was a rather good-looking young chap, with a smile about his full red lips, who lifted his mild eyes to yours with perhaps an effort at frankness too pronounced. He spoke well and fluently.

One night (he said), at the close of a hard day's work in his mission, a man came to him in evident distress. The man was a business man, in comfortable though modest circumstances, with a family of which perhaps the most interesting member was a beautiful girl of seventeen. The girl was attending a High School, where she was in one of the advanced classes, and the evening before had gone from school to spend the night at the home of a friend, a girl of her own age. The next evening, on her failure to return home, the parents became alarmed, and after unavailing inquiry at her school-mate's house, and in other quarters, the distraught father had appealed to the

social worker. The social worker at once caused an investigation to be made, and by a process of elimination (as he said, though, unlike Sherlock Holmes, he did not detail the successive steps of his logic) he concluded that the girl was in a certain quarter of the city; in fact, in a certain street. He then sent for the father, told him to supply himself with sufficient money, instructed him in the part he was to play, and was careful to stipulate that if he, the social worker, were to feign drunkenness or to indulge in conduct out of keeping with his character, the father was patiently and trustingly to await results. Thereupon they set forth, and before midnight visited some thirty houses of ill-fame. In the thirty-first house the suspicions of the social worker were confirmed, and, pretending to be intoxicated, he invited an inmate to accompany him, and ascended to the upper floor. He tried the doors along the hall, and finding them all open but one, and that locked, he lurched against it, broke it open, and on entering the room surprised a young woman, entirely nude, who screamed—until he muttered some word of understanding and encouragement. Meanwhile, the inmate had summoned madame the proprietress, who flew up the stairs, burst into the room, and emptied her revolver at the social worker.

The social worker, at this supreme moment in his recital, paused, and with a weary but reassuring smile, as who should say such adventures were diurnal monotonies in his life, remarked: "with no damage, however, to anything but the furniture and the woodwork."

But he had the girl in his arms and, thrusting aside foiled madame and the inmate, bore his charge downstairs, snatched a raincoat from the hall-rack, wrapped it about her, called to the father to come, and escaped into the street.

After the rescued girl had been restored to her home, and sufficiently recovered from her terrible experience to give a connected account of herself, she related the following incidents: Leaving school on that night, she had started for the home of the girl whom she was to visit—the girl not having attended school that day—and while passing a house in a respectable residential district, about five o'clock of the winter evening, darkness already having

fallen, a woman came to the door and in great distress told the girl that a baby was sick, that she was alone, and implored the girl to come in and care for the baby while she ran for a doctor. The girl complied, and on reaching the door, was immediately seized, drawn into the hallway, her cries smothered by a hand in which there was a handkerchief saturated with chloroform, and she knew no more until she regained consciousness in the place where the social worker had rescued her.

Here his direct recital ended. I put to him two or three questions:—Who is the girl? Where is she now? Where is the house into which she was beguiled? Where is the brothel in which she was imprisoned? He had answers for all these. The girl's name could not be divulged, even in official confidence, for the family could not risk publicity; the house where she had been summoned to care for the ailing baby was the home of wealthy and respectable people, who had been out of town at the time, and their residence had been broken into and used temporarily by the white slavers. As for the brothel, the social worker, by methods he did not disclose, had compelled the proprietress to leave the city, and the place was closed.

Such was the amazing adventure of the social worker. It was easy to imagine the effect of it when related to neuropathic women, to prurient and sentimental men, and in country churches to gaping yokels curious about "life" in the city. It was easy to understand the effect it would have on minds starved and warped by puritanism, ready for any sensation, especially one that might stimulate their moral emotions, and give them one more excuse for condemning the police. No wonder certain of the elect brethren in gratitude for having been told just what they wished to hear had contributed hundreds of dollars, that the "work" might go on!

I determined, therefore, that in one instance, at least, the truth as to this stock story should be discovered, and I instructed Mr. Mooney, the Director of Public Safety, to make a complete investigation. He detailed to the task the best of his detectives; the inspectors of the federal Government under the white slave laws were called in, and I asked two clergymen of my acquaintance who knew

the social worker and said they believed him, to give what aid they could. Together they worked for weeks. They made an exhaustive investigation, and their conclusion, in which the clergymen joined, was that there was not the slightest ground for the silly tale.

It was, of course, simply another variant of the story that had gone the rounds of two continents, a story which had been somehow psychologically timed to meet the hysteria which the pulpit, the Press, and the legislatures had displayed, as had the people, in one of those strange moral movements which now and then seize upon the public mind, and, in effect, make the whole population into a mob, which is, of course, the most moral thing in the world. The subject is considered in a very able article in THE ENGLISH REVIEW for June last year, written by Mrs. Teresa Billington-Greig, and there it is shown that not one of the stories told in England had any foundation in fact. So far as I know, no authentic verification of the story in any of its forms has ever been made. And yet it is the stock-in-trade of the professional moralists, and has been employed by them to generate that hysteria without which they cannot carry on their reforms. It has been repeated and accepted, that is all, and to doubt it has been to make oneself *particeps criminis*, a sort of accessory after the fact.

It is a subject which only the student of morbid psychology, I suppose, can illuminate properly, but I fancy that he would find somewhere a significance in the phrase "white slave," when acted upon by minds that have never been refined enough to imagine any but the grossest of objective crimes, and out of all this there has arisen a new conception of the prostitute quite as grotesque as that which it replaces. She is no longer the ruined and abandoned thing she once was, too vile for any contact with the virtuous and respectable; she no longer occupies even the sacrificial pose in which Cato centuries ago and Lecky in our own time figured her; she is not even the daughter of joy whose dalliance is the secret despair of moralists too prudent to imitate her abandon; she has become the white slave, a shanghaied innocent kept under lock and key. And thousands and thousands of her sisters are annually trapped in precisely the same way by the minions of a

huge system, organised like any modern combination of rapacity and evil, with luxurious headquarters, presumably in some skyscraper in New York, and its own attorneys, agents, kidnappers, crimpers, seducers, panderers, and procuresses all over the land, a vast and complicated organisation, with baffling ramifications in all the high and low places of the earth. It is even said, I believe, that somewhere in New York the trust conducts a daily auction. The sensational newspapers refer to it as "the white slave syndicate," as though it were as authentic as the Steel Trust or Standard Oil. With such a bizarre notion, the victims of their psychic lasciviousness are now obsessed. Raids and "revivals" must be inaugurated, a body of new laws enacted, and a horde of official inspectors, agents, and detectives turned loose on the land, empowered to arrest any man and woman travelling together, and hold them guilty until they are proved innocent.

I used to wish, when such proposals were presented to me as Mayor, that some of these cocksure persons who would solve the problem off-hand by issuing a general order to the police, could get themselves elected to the opportunity. Of course, I issued no general order on the subject; perhaps I was too sceptical, too much lacking in faith in the miraculous powers of the constabulary. Our city was like all cities; there were prostitutes in brothels, prostitutes in saloons, prostitutes in flats, prostitutes on the street at night. There were, for instance, a score or more of disorderly saloons where men and women congregated. But we found that merely by posting a policeman in uniform before such a place, its patronage was discouraged, and in a few days discontinued. Of course, it was a dangerous and preposterous power to wield; in the hands of unscrupulous police it might have appalling possibilities of evil. I had the idea of stationing a policeman before a disorderly house from Tom Johnson, who told me he had it from his father—who was once Chief of Police in Louisville. And so we adopted it, and after a while the wine-rooms were no more. And that was something. But the girls in them, of course, had to go somewhere, just as Jones said.

Then we found that the police, if they were brutal

enough, could drive the girls off the streets It seemed to me always a despicable sort of business—the actions of the police, I mean; I didn't like to hear the reports of it; I don't like to think of it, or write of it even now. It is not very creditable to make war on women, whatever the puritans may say. But the streets would show an improvement, even they would admit; much as they might linger and loiter and leer, the most seductively pure of them could not get himself "accosted" anywhere down town at night. Of course, after a while, the poor things would come back, or others exactly like them would come. Then the police would have to practise their brutalities all over again. Perhaps they were not brutal enough; I am not sure. To be sure, they were not as brutal as Augustus with his sumptuary laws, or as Theodosius, or Valentinian, or Justinian, or Karl the Great, or Peter the Great, or St. Louis, or Frederick Barbarossa, or the Empress Maria Theresa in Vienna, or as John Calvin in Geneva, or Cotton Mather in Massachusetts, or as the English puritans, with all their tortures and floggings and rackings and brandings and burnings. And even they were not brutal enough, it seems, since prostitution went right on down the centuries to our time. I suppose that we might have learned from their failures that prostitution could not be ended by physical force and brutality. However, when the girls were driven from the streets, inasmuch as the police did not despatch them, they still had to go somewhere, and the brothels remained. They had their own quarter, and if it was not a segregated quarter it was something very like it, since the police bent their efforts to rid other portions of the city of such places. It was perhaps a tolerated rather than a segregated district, and after a while the Director of Public Safety wished to try the experiment of making it a regulated district as well. I felt that the world was too old, and I found myself too much of its mood to hope that any good could come from any of the efforts of policemen to dispose of such a problem, but I was glad of any experiment conducted in sincerity which might make for the better, and accordingly the Director of Safety put his scheme into operation. It was not *réglementation* in the exact European sense, since the temper of our American people will not acquiesce in that,

and, as I discovered by some inquiries of my own in the principal cities of Europe, it is not of very valid effect over there. But the Director adopted most of the familiar requirements of the Parisian *réglement*, except the medical examinations, and the registration of those not *en maison*; he required the proprietress to report at police headquarters the presence of new inmates; he forbade them to have minors or male parasites in the houses, and as far as possible he separated the business from the saloon business. Any house which ignored his orders found a policeman posted before its doors. The result was, as Mr. Mooney could report in the course of a year, that the number of brothels had been reduced from more than two hundred to less than forty, and the number of prostitutes, of whom the police had any knowledge, in an equal proportion. He was very proud when General Bingham complimented his policemen and their policing, as he was at similar compliments from the Government's white slave agents.

Superficially this was a very gratifying report, but only superficially. Nearly three-fourths of the brothels had been closed, but their inmates had to go somewhere, just as Jones said, and the police found that clandestine prostitution had proportionately increased; the women had gone into flats, or hotels, or residences which on occasion could be made to serve as assignation houses. It may perhaps have improved the life of the prostitute, made it freer and more human, and perhaps it indicates that prostitution in America is showing a decadent tendency towards refinement. But while they had reduced the number of houses of prostitution, the police discovered that they had not reduced prostitution in the least, and when, after a trial of four years, I asked the Director and the Chief of Police what the result of the experiment had been, they said that, aside from the fact that it seemed to make for order in the city and simplified the work of policing, it had done no good.

The experience was like that of Chicago, where, after a police order prohibiting the sale of liquor in houses of prostitution, it was found to be—according to the report of the Vice Commission—" undoubtedly true that the result of the order has been to scatter the prostitutes over a wide territory and to transfer the sale of liquor carried on hereto-

fore in houses to the near-by saloon-keepers, and to flats and residential sections, but it is an open question whether it has resulted in the lessening of either of the two evils of prostitution and drink." And a member of the Vice Commission of Atlanta, where the brothels were all closed, told me the other day that there prostitution has been spread all over the town.

The experience, I think, is probably universal. It is not unusual to hear the systems of regulation used in European cities held up as models by the pessimistic as the only practical method of dealing with the problem. Paris used commonly to be considered as the ideal in this respect; latterly it is apt to be Berlin. The fact is that the *réglementation* which for years and years has been in force in Paris is a failure; the experience there was precisely what it was in our little city. In the *réglement* prescribed by the prefecture of police there are the familiar provisions for enrolment, for the exclusion of minors, even as servants or otherwise, and of students, from the *maisons de tolérance*, for medical examinations, &c. And yet, according to the latest figures I have been able to secure, there has been no appreciable effect in diminishing prostitution. There are in the city only thirty *maisons de tolérance*, with four hundred and twenty inmates. There are five thousand six hundred and seventy-six women registered who do not live *en maison*. But there are in Paris, so it is estimated, nearly sixty thousand women who do not reside *en maison*, and are not registered or subject in any way to the regulations, who nevertheless make their living by prostitution. And furthermore there is no evidence of the diminution of disease, except in the *maisons de tolérance*, and there only because the infected are at once sent to hospitals, so that *réglementation* seems to be as great a failure in Paris as any other method that mankind has tried.

In Paris, to be sure, because of the racial temperament, the attitude toward the whole subject is not at all what it is with us. There the prostitute is not condemned to permanent degradation as the puritans insist she be with us. Prostitution, it seems, is at times but a temporary occupation, resorted to for a variety of reasons; sometimes to obtain a professional or artistic education, sometimes

because of economic pressure. But in any event society and the law do not prevent a girl from giving it up, as they do with us.

But if regulations would succeed at all, it would seem that they would do so in Berlin, which the well-known German genius for organisation has made the most efficiently governed city in the world. The German law does not prohibit prostitution, but the criminal code severely regulates the practice by bringing it under the supervision of the morals police. And on the day I write these lines the newspapers publish an Associated Press dispatch from Berlin, which bears its testimony to the failure there:—

> "Berlin.—The trial of three vice squad policemen this week illuminates the methods of Berlin to regulate the demi-monde, which if it were reported from the United States would immediately be termed 'typical American police corruption.' The men accused were Officers Thiede, Bachmann, and Seegebarth. Thiede's wife was accused of permitting her husband and a woman informant to meet at her home. The three policemen are members of a special squad whose sole duty it is to control the demi-monde. They were accused of accepting bribes of money, food, and clothing from a woman. In September, 1911, a Berlin paper published a letter from one of the accused policeman to a demi-mondaine named Ortmayer. An investigation followed, and as result, twelve policemen were suspended. The trial has shown the ridiculous ineffectiveness of Berlin's system of controlling the demi-monde. It is estimated that there are 40,000 such women in Berlin, and only 4,068 are 'under control' of the small army of plain clothes 'morals' policemen who are detailed to look after them."

In England, on the other hand, there is no regulation; any evening along Piccadilly, and elsewhere in London, one may see street-walkers whom the police never dream of molesting. The lack of regulation is in part due to the traditional puritanic attitude of our northern race, and partly to the respect for personal liberty that exists in

England. There the principle is much more scrupulously respected than with us, with whom individual liberty indeed is hardly a principle at all.

Other lands have made other experiments, but everywhere and in all times the same failure has been recorded, from the efforts of Greece to regulate the *hetairæ* and *dicteriades* and the severe segregations of ancient Rome, down to the latest reform administration in an American city. Nothing that mankind has ever tried has been of the slightest avail. And now come the vice commissions with their pornographic reports, and no doubt feeling that they have to propose *something* after all the trouble they have gone to, when they have set forth in tabulated statistics what everybody in the world already knows, they repeat the old ineptitudes. That is, more law, more hounding by the police. The Chicago product is the classic and the model for all of these, and as the latest and loftiest triumph of the puritan mind in the realm of morals and of law, a triumph for which three centuries of innocence of nothing save humour alone could have prepared it, its own great masterpiece in morals is at once forbidden circulation in the mails because of its immorality!

The Chicago report makes nearly a hundred specific recommendations, among them "constant and persistent repression," and eventually by way of a happy and original thought, "absolute annihilation of prostitution." All unattended boys and girls must be sent home by the police at nine o'clock at night; there must be no seats in the public parks in the shade, searchlights must be installed in the parks to flash their rays here and there in the summer nights. And, of course, there must be a "special morals police squad." The Commission estimated that in Chicago, exclusive of the women in flats, rooms, hotels, and houses of assignation, there are prostitutes in houses of prostitution that receive visits daily from over 15,000 men, so that the task of the special morals police is to be rather difficult, if in their efforts at "constant repression" and "ultimate annihilation" they are expected to apprehend and conduct to police stations that number of men and their companions every day.

The problem, of course, cannot be solved by a phrase any more than it can be solved by policemen. It will do

no good to call them "morals" police; the word has a reassuring note, of course, possibly by some confused with "moral" police, but policemen are policemen still. I have seen the *police des mœurs* in European cities, and they looked quite like other policemen. And all cities in America have had morals police; that is exactly what our policemen have been, and that is exactly what is the matter with them. That is, all cities have had detectives especially detailed to supervise the conduct of the vicious, and they always fail. We had such a squad in Toledo for years, though it was not called morals police. It was composed of men, mere men, because we had nothing else but men to detail to the work. They were honest, decent, self-respecting men for the most part, who on the whole did very well considering the salaries they were paid and the task imposed on them. They regulated vice as well as anybody anywhere could regulate it. But, of course, they failed to solve the problem, just as the world for thousands of years has failed to solve it, with all the machinery of all the laws of all the lawgivers in history. Solon in Athens tried every known device, including segregation. He established a State monopoly of houses of prostitution, confined the *dicteriades* to a certain quarter of the city, and compelled them to wear a distinctive dress, but all his stringent laws had broken down long before Hyperides dramatically bared the breast of Phryne to the Areopagus. In Rome there was the most severe regulation in the ancient world, and yet—it may be read in Gibbon—the successive experiments of the law under Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Valerian, Theodosius, and Justinian were all failures, and when the laws were most rigorous and the most rigorously enforced immorality was at its height. Charlemagne tried and failed, and though the sentiment of the age of chivalry and the rise of Christianity for a while softened the law, under the English Puritans, bawds were whipped, pilloried, branded, and imprisoned, and for a second offence put to death. France was not behind; under Louis IX., prostitutes were exiled, and in 1635 an edict in Paris condemned men concerned in the traffic to the galleys for life, while the women and girls were whipped, shaved, and banished for life. Charles V., in the monastery at Yuste, trying to make two

clocks tick in unison, found his efforts no more vain than his attempts to regulate human conduct, and Philip II. tried again to do what his father had been unable to accomplish. Peter the Great was a grim enforcer of the laws, and in Vienna Maria Theresa was most rigorous with prostitutes, putting them in a certain garb, and then in handcuffs; she was almost as remorseless in her treatment of them as was John Calvin in Geneva, which came to have more prostitutes proportionately than any city in Europe. Several modern attempts have been made at annihilation. Saxony tried to abolish its brothels, but they exist in Dresden and other cities of the kingdom. Hamburg claims to have abolished them, but in that Free and Hanseatic city I was told by an American who was investigating the subject that there were as many there as elsewhere.

It will not do to employ the glib excuse of the off-hand reformer and say that the laws have not been enforced. The rulers I have named, and a long line of others, with wondrous codes and inflexible wills, have tried to enforce them, and their efforts were all without avail. A review of the history of the subject, and indeed of the history of mankind, leads one to agree with Dr. Arthur Shadwell, the learned authority:—

> "A general view of the whole subject suggests no pleasant or hopeful conclusions. Prostitution appears to be inseparable from human society in large communities. In different countries and ages it has in turn been patronised and prohibited, ignored and recognised, tolerated and condemned, regulated and let alone, flaunted and concealed. Christianity, the greatest moral force in the history of mankind, has repeatedly and systematically attacked it with a scourge in one hand and balm in the other; but the effect has been trifling or transient. Nor have all the social and administrative resources of modern civilisation availed to exercise an effective control. The elementary laws on which prostitution rests are stronger than the artificial codes employed by moral teaching, conventional standards or legislatures; and attempts at repression only lead to a change of form, not of substance."

It is the testimony of all the students of the question, Dr. Sanger, Dr. Alfred Blaschko, Mr. Havelock Ellis, and all the rest; it is the judgment of history, and after all this the notion that policemen, or morals squads, or the most dehumanised and relentless prosecutor, rampant in a community, can accomplish anything, is sodden stupidity.

And these laws have not only failed, they have not only stimulated and intensified the evil, but they themselves have created a white slavery worse than that of the preposterous tales and sentimental twaddle that circulate among the neurotic, a white slavery worse than any ever imagined by the most romanticistic of the dime novelists or by the most superheated of the professional reformers. Every one of these laws has been devised, written, and enacted in the identical spirit with which the Puritans in Massachusetts branded the red letter on the scarlet woman. Every one of them is an element of that brutal and amazing conspiracy by which society makes of the girl who once "goes wrong," to use the lightest of our animadversions, a pariah more abhorred and shunned than if she were a rotting leper on the cliffs of Molokai. She may be human, alive, with the same feelings that all the other girls in the world have; she may have within her the same possibilities, life may mean exactly the same thing to her; she may have youth with all its vague and beautiful longings—but there is now no course open to her save to go on in sin to the end of days whose only mercy is that they are apt to be brief. No off-hand moralist, even by exercising his imagination to the last degree of cruelty, has ever been able to devise such a prison as that. White slave, indeed, shackled by the heaviest chains the Puritan conscience has yet been able to forge for others!

Strange, too, since the attitude is assumed by a civilisation which calls itself Christian and preaches that the old law, with its eye for an eye and its tooth for a tooth, was done away and lost in a new and beautiful dispensation. "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." If the world is ever to solve this problem, it must first of all apprehend the spirit of this simple and gracious expression, do away with its old laws, its old cruelties, its old brutalities, its old stupidities, and approach the problem in that human spirit which I suspect is so very near the divine.

Once in this attitude, in this spirit, society will be in a position to learn something from history and from human experience, something from life itself, and what it will learn first is that Puritanical laws, the hounding of the police, and all that sort of thing, have never lessened prostitution in the world, but on the contrary have increased it.

"But what are we going to do about it?"

Well, the first thing to do is to repeal all the criminal laws on the subject. They do no good, and, even when it is attempted to enforce them, the result is worse than futile. I myself, with my own eyes, in my own town have seen a magistrate fine a street-walker and then suspend the fine so that, as he explained to her in all judicial seriousness, she might go out and "earn" enough money to come back and pay it! And not a person in the court-room, so habituated and conventionalised are we all, ever cracked a smile or apparently saw anything out of the way—least of all the street-walker!

This is the most trivial of instances. But it would not be enough simply to repeal these laws from the statute books of the State; it will be necessary to accomplish the immensely more difficult task of repealing them from the human heart, where they were written long ago in anger, and hatred, and jealousy, and cruelty, and fear, that is, in the heat of all the baser passions. What I am trying to say is that the first step in any reasonable and effective reform is an entire change of attitude on the subject, and about the only good to be expected from the agitation about white slavery, with all its preposterous exaggerations and absurd sensationalism, is that it is perhaps making for a changed attitude, a new conception; if it will accomplish nothing more than to get the public mind—if there is a public mind, and not a mere public passion—to view the prostitute as a human being, very much like all the other human beings in the world, it will have been worth all it has cost in energy and emotion and credulity. If this sort of repeal can be made effective, if the prostitute can be assured of some chance in life outside the dead line which society so long ago drew for her, the first step will have been taken.

This, of course, will mean a much larger task than merely lobbying a Bill through the Legislature. It will

come only by the slowest and most difficult of processes and that hardest of all work in the world, *i.e.*, thinking.

The next step possibly will be the erection of a single standard of morals. And this cannot be done by passing a law, or by turning in an alarm for the police. That means thinking too, and education, and evolution, and all the other slow and toilsome processes of which the off-hand reformers are so impatient. This single standard will have to be raised first in each individual heart; after that it will become the attitude of the general mind.

And then the commerce in vice will have to be stopped. I do not mean prohibited by penal laws. Policemen cannot stop it, and policemen should have no more to do with it than firemen. In fact, much of the commerce has proceeded from the fact that its regulation has been entrusted to the police. It would be a subject for the fiscal laws. It is, I assume, known by most persons that the owners of the dilapidated tenements in which for the most part prostitution is carried on, because of the "risk," extort exorbitant rentals for them, and then, on the ground that they can rent them to no one of respectability, they hold them to be so worthless that they pay little, if any, taxes on them. Our present tax laws, of course, have the effect of rewarding the slothful, the lazy, and the idle, and of punishing the energetic and the enterprising producer in business, and it would be quite possible to revise the tax laws so that tenderloins would be economically impossible, because they would cease to be profitable.

In the next place, or some place in the programme, there should be some sort of competent and judicious sex education. I do not know just who would impart it, since no one as yet knows very much about it, but with the earnest, sincere, and devoted work that is being carried on all over the world by the scientific men and women who are studying eugenics and social hygiene, there is hope in this direction, even if it is probable that the world will not be saved by the new race of athletes that are scientifically to be bred, and may still have some use in its affairs for the minds of its cripples who in all times have contributed so much to its advancement.

The marvellous phenomenon known as the feminist movement which the students and historians of the next

two hundred years will be busy elucidating will play its part too, for in its vast impulse toward the equality of the sexes it must not only bring the single standard of morals, but it should somehow be the means of achieving for women their economic independence. This perhaps would be the most important of all the steps to be taken in the solution of the problem. The economic environment, of course, is in the lives of many girls a determining factor, and in this connection the minimum wage indeed has its bearing. The old Puritanic laws were conceived in minds intensely preoccupied with the duty of punishing people for their sins. Prostitutes were prostitutes because they were "bad," and when people were bad they must be punished. But now we see, or begin to see, if vaguely, that, except in metaphysics, there is no such thing in our complex human life as an absolute good or an absolute bad; we begin to discern dimly the causes of some of the conduct called bad, and to the problem of evil we begin to apply the conceptions of economic influences, social influences, pathological influences, and other influences most of us know little or nothing about.

Thus we begin to see that a girl's wages, for instance, may have something to do with what we call her morals; not everything, but something. The wages of a girl's father have something to do with it too, and the wages of her great-grandfather for the matter of that. So may the dividends on which live the delicate and charming ladies she beholds alighting from their motor-cars every morning in the shopping district have something to do with it, though she is as unconscious and as innocent of the relation as they, as ignorant as all of us are. Rents have something to do with it, and so have taxes.

But after the whole economic system has been readjusted and perfected and equalised, after we have the minimum wage, and the single tax, and industrial democracy, and every man gets what he produces, and economic pressure has been as scientifically adjusted as the atmospheres in a submarine torpedo boat, there is always the great law of the contrariety of things to be reckoned with, according to which the more carefully planned the event, the less it resembles the original conception. The human vision is so weak, and the great circle of life so prodigious,

that it can behold only the smallest segment of the arc. The solution will come, if it ever comes at all, by slow, patient, laborious, drudging study, far from the midnight session of the legislature, far from the ear and the pencil of the eager reporter, far from the platform of the sweating revivalist, far from the head office of the police. Our fondly perused pornography might expose the whole of the underworld to the light of day, the general assembly might enact successive revisions of the revised statutes for a hundred years, we might develop the most superb police organisation in all history, achieving the apotheosis of the Puritan ideal with a dictagraph in every bedroom and closet in the town, and it all would be of no avail. The study must survey the whole field of social and domestic relations, until the vast mystery of life is understood, and the relation between its vast antithesis established as Tolstoy adumbrates them in his story of the poor mother who took her daughter to the public-house in the village, and the rich mother who, at the same time, took her daughter to the Court at St. Petersburg. It will be found perhaps in the long run, for which so few are ever willing to remain, that the eradicable causes of prostitution are due to involuntary poverty, and the awful task is to get involuntary poverty out of the world. It is a task which has all the tremendous difficulties of constructive social labour, and it is as deliberate as evolution itself. And even if it is ever accomplished, there will remain a residuum in the problem inhering in the mysteries of sex, concerning which even the wisest and most devoted of our men of science will confess they know very little as yet and have not much to tell us that will do us any good.

# Prehistoric England

## By Arbiter

"WHY, whatever is that?" she exclaimed, and, placing her ungloved finger-tips upon the dirty pan thrust ungraciously into the railway carriage, my American friend, whom I had met at the boat, broke into gay laughter.

"My goodness, it's about as warm as a baby's bottle," she said; "and you gave the porter twopence for that old thing! Tell me, aren't your trains warmed anyway?"*

I thought of explaining—the English voluntary system, dividends, directorships, younger sons; but the pan caught on, so to speak, and before I could frame my reply a deep voice came from a tall, haggard-looking man who sat in the opposite corner, enveloped in an enormous coat and a couple of rugs: "They warm the sprouts, madam, for luncheon all right; otherwise you'll find things in this country pretty generally prehistoric."

"Oh, but shall we have sprouts too?" said my companion, with the eagerness of a child awaiting the entry of a Christmas pudding; "with stout, bottled stout"—and she clapped her hands with delight.

And, to be sure, we did have sprouts and stout for luncheon. We did get fearfully cold on the journey. And when we arrived in London we did have the "rough and tumble" she anticipated: shouting and securing a porter, discovering the luggage, getting it on to cabs—"Just the sort of 'mix-up,' I expect, makes Englishmen so dandy," my fair traveller reflected; and I confess it reminded me vividly of my first arrival at Constantinople.

Avoiding the Piccadilly hotels—for my friend with her little girl was going on early the next morning—we drove to a large hotel conveniently near the station, a vast, solid place which I had known as eminently respect-

* They are not, as we are painfully aware in this cold weather; even where there is a heating apparatus it often is not working.—ED.

able from my childhood. Let me set down exactly our experiences.

After the luggage had been brought into the hall by a number of foreign porters, we managed to find the lift-boy, who at length condescended to take us up to the room which I had ordered to be held ready for the lady overnight.

We must have annoyed the lift-boy, for, planting us suddenly on the second floor, he shouted, "Down the passage to the left," and, slamming the gate, as suddenly sank down the shaft. We found No. 31, however, without much difficulty—a large room, dark and dreary, with two beds, a table, a chest of drawers and a washstand—but, to my annoyance, no preparation whatever had been made: there was no fire, no hot water; the jug stood upside-down in the basin, the water-bottle was empty, and there were no towels.

Needless to say, there was no speaking-tube or house telephone. I turned to the frayed and dirty bell-rope hanging over the big bed, and, climbing on the mattress, I pulled it judiciously. For five minutes I tugged and strained; then, as nothing happened, I clambered down to the floor.

"I'll go and find the maid," I said, and went out; tramped down the long, dark, Turkey-carpeted corridor, and finally hearing giggling voices behind a half-opened door I entered, politely inquiring of the two maids I saw making a bed there how I could get someone to serve No. 31, as the bell did not ring, and the lady who had just arrived was in need of hot water.

My request appeared to amuse them.

"Oh, Minny serves there," they exclaimed. "No, we can't serve that side of the house. She'll be round in a minute;" and so back I strolled down the dark corridor.

But no Minny came. My American friend had now become fidgety.

"Look here, that prehistoric bell must ring somewhere," she said; whereat she pulled at it so firmly that down the dusty old bit of wool-rope fell, breaking "in her hands," as Minny might have said had she been present to see it. We were now defenceless. Something obviously had to be done.

I went out again, and presently I found a servants' pantry, where a young German sat asleep on a chair in his shirt-sleeves. It was a chance not to be missed.

"*Donnerwetter! Potstausend. Auf*, you fathead!" I shouted, and so loudly that the youth sprang up as if he were back again in the guard-room of his Fatherland's barracks; indeed, he nearly saluted me, such was his astonishment at my German pronunciation.

"Minny," I went on in German. "Where the deuce is Minny?"

The Alsatian youth now began to mumble incoherently. He was asleep. Couldn't I see that? He did not know where Minny was. How should he? It was not his business.

"Then whose business is it?" I yelled.

"I'll go and see," he retorted, as if I had insulted him; and with that he made for the door and disappeared.

Again I found myself in the corridor, but I was now a desperate man.

For I could hear bells ringing everywhere, now here, now there: a diatonic chord of bells, curt, protracted, above, below, to the right, to the left, and they seemed like the bells of a haunted castle. Not a soul to be seen in that long, dark corridor, and those fearful bells pealing there mysteriously and chaotically behind the doors.

I dared not return to No. 31 without a Minny. Gathering up all my courage, I shouted:

"Minny! Minny! Minny!"

I hustled on past another half-dozen doors.

"Minny! Minny! Mi . . . !" At that moment a door at my side opened with a crack.

"Anything wrong, sir?" said a bald gentleman in a heliotrope dressing-gown, stepping briskly out; and, as I turned round ferociously upon him, he waved his right arm towards me with the soothing gesture of a preacher.

"Perhaps I can assist you. I'm a minister of the Church of England."

The colour of his dressing-gown infuriated me.

"Does your bell ring?" I growled back.

"Yes, I think so," he replied amiably. "Come in, sir, and let me see."

His manner was so urbane I could not but consent,

and together we awaited the experiment on the bell-rope. The bland gentleman fingered carefully the faded, tattered cord, and then pulled gently—firmly—fiercely.

"Odd, isn't it?" he murmured. "Perhaps it's out of order."

"Everything is out of order in this d——d hotel!" I returned; and, so saying, I pushed past him out into the corridor to resume my cries, this time at the top of my voice:

"Minny! Minny!"

Suddenly, at the far end of the corridor, I saw a female figure tripping along with sleeves rolled up, carrying in one hand a large can and in the other a couple of bath towels. I dashed up and caught hold of her by the shoulder.

"Hold on," I said. "Are you Minny?"

To my great surprise, a laughing face looked up into mine.

"I couldn't wait all day for your Minny, so I just got out and opened every door until I came to a bathroom. See—and yes, you might carry that can; it's heavy, but it's full of hot water, anyway."

It was my friend, and that is how she got her towels and hot water in one of London's leading hotels.

But our troubles were not over yet. The luggage had not come up, and my friend wanted to get out a new "shirt-waist"; and again she turned to me for assistance. This time I decided to go at once to the root of the trouble. Sure enough, there was the luggage all piled up downstairs by the lift.

"Can't you send the luggage up to 31?" I said pleasantly. "The lady wants it."

"We will when the lift's free," answered the hall-porter. "They're very big trunks to handle, and two of our men are out."

"But isn't there a luggage lift?"

"No, sir."

"Do you mean to say you can only get the luggage up in that small passenger lift when it happens to be disengaged?"

"That's it," returned the porter, and it seemed to give him great satisfaction to tell me so.

In truth, the lift was small. It was on the move all the time, descending, ascending; and whenever the lift-boy stepped out for a momentary stretch and relief, a little bell rang, and up the thing went again, and then down it came, and I wondered whether we ever should get the luggage up that day until all the people in the hotel had retired to bed.

While I was expostulating with the several porters, I noticed that my friend's luggage was being thrown hastily into the lift.

"So you *are* taking it up at last?" I quizzed.

"Yes, sir. The lady rang me up a moment ago and give me 2*s*. 6*d*. to bring her things up."

And that is how my friend got hold of her luggage.

I shall never forget the dreariness, the gloom, of that place; the bad and expensive five-course dinner, the utter lack of every modern convenience, organisation, or authority, the uncivility of the *personnel*, the portentous discomfort of that great London hotel with over two hundred bedrooms.

When I came round in the morning to take my friend to the station, I found her in dire distress. She had had no breakfast, for no one had called her, and Minny—phantom Minny!—having fallen down with the tray some fifty yards down the corridor, with the breakfast—had not been heard of again.

"Do you think there ever was a Minny?" my friend remarked, just before the train started. "Do you know, I enjoyed my stay in that hotel just ever so much. It was like nothing on earth; and if it hadn't been for the candies, I guess I should have starved. I'm so grateful to you for taking me there. It was one life's experience after another.

"No, really, I think your hotels are too beautiful—and, say, don't forget to get my little girl's coat, will you? Size, eight-year-old; just a plain winter coat; warm, and not too expensive. Good-bye. Thanks so much. . . ."

I looked forward to the little purchase with genuine pleasure.

I felt I had not distinguished myself in the hotel line. In the shops it would be different. Besides, it was a novelty to go shopping in the big emporia where the ladies

go; it would amuse me; I would acquit myself well; and, so thinking, I strolled down towards the restaurant area, had a good steak* and some port, and then I took a cab to the best shop I knew of.

Before entering, I glanced at the window, saw a number of coats and nice things displayed, and, slipping in between two ladies who were cheerfully holding up the entrance, I walked up to a shopwalker and asked my direction.

On the second floor at last I paused, looked about, selecting a pretty girl who appeared to be in deep thought, and to whom I briefly stated my demand. It seemed to astonish her, for she started out of her reverie, and extracting a needle mysteriously from her bodice she began to prick at her finger.

"Coats! Oh, downstairs, please. Second to the right."

"Thank you." But somehow I felt suspicious. The second to the right was furs, and I had not come to buy furs.

"Children's coats?"

"You've passed it, sir, just back there on your left."

And so back I sauntered with the unconcern of the consciously well-dressed man.

"Children's coats." I repeated the phrase as often as I could, addressing any shop-assistant who seemed willing to listen to me for a moment, with the result that I found myself in the big room again upstairs where there were sofas and tall mirrors, and tall girls ambulating about in low-cut French frocks, prinking, preening, posturing, and, gazing at them, fat and plain, dowdy and overdressed women poked, pinched, plucked, and made faces; and shopwalkers fussed, and cast critical glances at themselves in the glasses; and there a red-faced dowager prodded the ferrule of her umbrella into a heap of twenty-five-guinea silk dresses flung on the carpet; and, hard by, three shapes swathed in acutely tight-fitting chocolate robes stood in classic grouping, as if there was nothing doing at all, and all the time people came and went, stared and

* I ought perhaps to mention here that, being particular about tender steaks, I carefully selected an Italian restaurant to procure that staple English dish.

giggled, grinned and gesticulated; and against the rail overlooking the big spiral staircase the mousy pretty girl I had spoken to leant in reverie and stuck needles into her fingers.

The scene was interesting, anyhow; it was life, theatrical. I made my way up to the comely group who seemed to have nothing to do, and asked where I could see "some children's coats."

At first I thought they were not going to take any notice, but suddenly the tallest one of the three swung round upon me, and—pouting in rather a mischievous way, I thought—she declared that she "must go." It was not her department. She had only come over there to talk business with Miss Harrington. She must "go back." I had been talking to a mannequin, a Maudie, and—yes, it was getting on for four o'clock, and I hadn't even seen a coat in an hour and a quarter.

I next advanced to a mature shopwalker who wore the fashionable cut of side-whisker.

"I want a child's coat," I said.

"Certainly, sir; downstairs and four to the left, please."

"But I have been told twice to come here."

"Oh, that was a mistake, unless you want little girls' coats."

"But I do want little girls' coats. That's just what I do want," I said.

"Minny!"—I jumped. "No, look here!" But it was too late; the man was already by the railing, by the pretty, mousy girl; and before I could further remonstrate, up they both came, and Minny stood before me in the flesh.

"Little girls' coats." The order was decisive. The mature shopwalker strolled away. Minny flung back a big cupboard door, and returned to me with her arms full. I liked some of the coats, but before choosing I asked her to take the length. They were a foot too long all of them, and at this discovery Minny looked vexed.

"I don't think we've got any shorter ones," she put out at me.

"Please go and see," I returned; and again Minny flung open a big door.

But the next lot were horrid coats, thin, common, no warmth, no value.

"You must have some others?" I queried.

"Well, we've furs, of course, on the first floor, but . . ."

"Look here, what's that coat over there, on the model?"

We went across to see it, quite a pretty design, but too thin for the winter; no use for my friend's child.

"Are there *no* others?" I said.

"I'm afraid not," Minny retorted. "We're out of stock of your size. We can order it for you, of course."

"But I want a coat at once. You advertise them all over the place. It's cold, and the child hasn't got a jacket. Do you mean to say you have nothing between these two things?"

Minny pulled out a needle and pricked at her finger.

"I'll inquire," she said; and for the next ten minutes I was left to my opportunities.

She returned with a fierce-looking woman, both she and the fierce one littered with coats.

"That's all we can do, sir," said the fierce face. "Next week we shall be having a fresh assortment, if you care to look in."

I rose. It was after five. I would try elsewhere, but on the top of the staircase I saw such a handsome shop-walker that I thought I must throw myself upon his mercy. I was particularly pleasant to him, told him all about my quest and its failure, and begged him to procure me a child's coat not over four pounds, as I had only five sovereigns in my pocket.

He was polite, sympathetic, and finally, *sotto voce*, advised me to try old Thompson's on the other side of the Park, who sometimes had a good thing. There was time. I thanked him profusely, and set off with renewed confidence. But Thompson's had nothing. There was not a coat approximating the size I wanted to be had, and after twenty minutes' search there I took another cab to another emporium, and finally just got into a fourth store before the closing hour, where I stayed till I was turned out.

There seemed to be no simple, warm children's coats in London in November. However, the next day I was out

early, and spent the morning in diligent and business-like pursuit. Over the coffee at luncheon I began to reflect seriously on the whole position. I had got no further. There apparently were no plain, warm children's coats. And not only that, no man or woman in any of the dozen shops I had been into seemed to want to sell me one, or to care in the least whether I bought one or not. I had started out with the idea of buying a coat. My mission had become now a matter of social inquiry and study, a case of national psychology and investigation. The general attitude of the sales-people in these places I found to be one of ill-disguised hostility to their customers, a sort of "don't-care-if-you-don't-buy" manner which struck me particularly after my acquaintance with the trade abroad, where, if a man goes into a shop to buy, say, a two-shilling pair of gloves, the youth or maid behind the counter will try pairs on by the round dozen until the practised eye pronounces a fit. I could get no personal, no intelligent, attention. Shopping, to my surprise, proved anything but an agreeable affair. And all the time I heard tired girls saying to anxious customers, "Not in stock, madam," or "We'll get it for you," or "We find we're just out"; and nowhere could I discern any training of these people, or the smallest graciousness of manner*—women's shopping seemed to be a business run to catch the suburban wife, mother, daughter, or spinster who only has a few hours in town and must buy the article somehow to catch the 6.20 back for supper.

Admitted, I didn't try the Bond Street shops, but wherever I did try I found the same queer conditions—poor stock, a disobliging *personnel*, the "take-it-or-leave-it" attitude, and a general hurry-scurry of rage and despair, even in places where the lift was not out of order.

But after luncheon I felt virile enough for any shop-walker. I tried the smaller shops, other big ones up and down, and at last, noticing that the taximeter clock marked 17*s.* 6*d.*, I gave the man a sovereign and got out.

I reckoned up the cost of the search so far. The first

* This "unwillingness" may be due to the curious fact that every article seems to be wrapped up in paper or cardboard and tied with a string, so that the physical process of tying and untying causes nervous exhaustion and irritability.

day had cost me 7*s.* 6*d.* in cabs; on the second I had spent 4*s.* 6*d.* before lunch in cabs, and £1 after lunch, and the luncheon had cost me 4*s.* 8*d.*, and I was now paying another shilling on tea, and still I had not bought a coat. What would my friend think of me? I could not wire her "Impossible find winter coat for child." She might think me incapable or ridiculous; but there it was; and while I was so cogitating I saw a lady friend of mine strolling through the tea-room, whom I knew to be a woman of some individuality.

"My dear Lady Sarah," I cried to her. "Look here, do help me. I've been trying for two days to buy a child's coat, and I can't find one. There don't seem to be any coats. Do . . ." But here my friend gently interrupted me.

"I know," she said coaxingly. "I know what shopping is. Now sit down and let us have some tea. Dismiss the coat from your mind. Tell me about your dear mother," and on she prattled for half an hour, until I really felt my nerves had got soothed a bit, and then we paid the bill—I paid the bill rather (which added another shilling to my general expenses)—and we set out to find a coat.

"I don't suppose you know how to talk to these girls," she said on the way. "Now don't you speak or smile at them. Look stern. Oh, and don't be surprised at my shop manner. It's the only way, you see, and I've had four children to dress, as you know, and considerable experience." All of which strategically I thought admirable.

We skirmished through the mob, she talking volubly all the while about what she styled "shop neurasthenia," the insular, wooden methods of the shops generally, their absence of taste, their uniformity and conservatism, the difficulty of buying, the shortage principle of the stock, the want of personal initiative; in fine, the sheer terror of the whole purchasing business. And just before we reached the place where the "Maudies" walked, she turned round almost fiercely upon me, saying, "Shopping in London is prehistoric."

"Great heavens," I said, "that is what the far-travelled Englishman said in the train!" And I thought. . . .

"Now I want to see some coats for a child of eight;

warm, useful coats, do you hear? And please be quick, as I'm in a hurry."

I'm sure Minny would have bitten me if she had dared; all the same, I noticed she was impressed by my friend's furs and decisiveness; and presently she returned with a bundle of coats—to my secret joy, the very same coats she had shown to me.

Lady Sarah measured them, flung down her muff, and holding the girl with that curious green light that comes into her eyes when she is angry, she rapped out:

"Now what's the good of bringing me coats that won't fit? If you don't want to serve me, say so, and I'll ask for the manager. Otherwise——" But Minny had taken the hint, and shortly returned with more coats in her arms, and with her came an elderly woman—who did not affect so tight-fitting a skirt as Minny, and was evidently a lady of some importance.

"No, I don't like these," Lady Sarah said disdainfully. "I shall really have to complain about you people. It's always the same. 'Nothing in stock.' Absurd, I call it. Just send for someone in charge."

I began to feel elated, especially when a shopwalker came up and joined in the conversation, and presently, as if by magic, another shopwalker appeared in support, and to them there came another shop-girl, a couple more, and yet a third—an awfully pretty girl this—and finally a grey-haired lady, who seemed to have some real authority, for they all made way for her to talk to my friend; and then I observed that gradually Lady Sarah was getting out-pointed, out-talked, out-argufied, and that across the mousy, pretty features of Minny a sardonic smile seemed to be spreading, which made her look at once peculiarly irritating and attractive.

And then into the *mêlée* the handsome shopwalker came, and the moment he appeared Lady Sarah turned a green eye upon him.

"You look a sensible sort of man," she began. "Can't you find me a plain, warm coat for a child of eight?" And I could see the young man was flattered.

At once the search, the going and coming, the measuring, the argufying, and the cross give-and-take began all over again. The good-looking young man took hold of

the specially good-looking young woman, and pushed her ostentatiously aside. He wanted the field to himself. He began to talk about quality, the season, the lining, the durability of his goods. He bent over and peered into Lady Sarah's eyes, now growing greener and greener. He shrugged his shoulders, and the elderly woman shrugged hers. He listened deferentially, he responded like a Park orator. More coats came up, and yet other coats, and Lady Sarah pinched and poked them all, viciously and then caressingly; she had them each measured, and every time the measurement proved wrong she picked up the coat and flung it across at Minny or at the best-looking girl, saying, naïvely and composedly, "Now what's the good of showing me that?" I was lost in admiration. More coats appeared, more shopwalkers, more girls, but still Lady Sarah went on ordering, measuring, poking, thrusting, pinching, and rejecting, until quite suddenly she stood up and saying, "I see it's no use. You haven't got any coats," she moved abruptly away towards the big cupboards which flanked the wall.

She strolled along, I following her, and then quickly she began to open drawers, so rapidly and dexterously that the little group she had just quitted, who were engaged in discussing the scene, neither followed nor interrupted her. Suddenly I saw her dart down, plunge a hand into a drawer, and, picking out a number of small coats, she waved her muff and affixed her pince-nez.

She was at once surrounded. The best-looking young man hastened up and put on his most engaging smile.

"Measure those coats, will you?" said Lady Sarah icily, and a moment later the answer came. She pulled out another, a nice, warm, claret-coloured coat with a black velvet collar—the size suited exactly.

"And what do you call these coats, pray?" said Lady Sarah, pinching the material to see if it was too woolly; and without waiting for an answer she said in staccato tones, "I see it's marked three pounds, but it's slightly soiled in the lining, so I'll take it for two ten. Be quick, please. Yes, I'll take it now, please, and put it down to my account—Lady Sarah Ovington-Ripley, 42 Eaton ——"

I must say I enjoyed the confusion of the shop-people, the feebleness of their defence, the sight of Minny's face when she heard she had been serving a titled lady all the while without knowing it, the general discomfiture, the complete triumph of my ingenious friend.

And plainly she meant mischief. Just before she left she lisped prettily to the somewhat crestfallen beauty-shopwalker:

"Do give me your name. Next time I come here I'll ask for you. I do like intelligent shopwalkers, you know." And with that she smiled at me, and, taking my arm, we passed on.

At the top of the stairs the young man sidled up to us.

"They had no business to be there, madam. How was I to know those coats were in that drawer?"

This time I felt it was my turn.

"Of course not," I threw in. "Your business is on the stage."

I thanked Lady Sarah profusely, saw her into her car, and rushed to the telegraph office to wire the good news to my American friend. The next evening I received a letter—

"DEAR MR. ——,

"How charming of you! I am grateful to you, but now I must make a confession. You didn't think I had really come to England without providing my child with a coat, did you? Do you remember our companion in the railway carriage with his 'prehistoric England,' and how you pitched into him? Well, now, after that prehistoric hotel you took me to, I thought I would give you an opportunity to try your prehistoric shops, women's shops, those that men don't know. But really I never thought you would succeed in buying a coat under a week. How awfully clever of you! How did you manage it? And it is quite a nice coat too, for which I hereby enclose cheque. Now do write and tell me all about it, and whether you really did it alone. Thank you so very, very much. But next week you can have your revenge. I'm looking out for a house, as you know. Will you help me? I'm told that's a prehistoric business too. Do let us sample it together, may we? Now don't forget, I'm dying

to know about the coat, and I'm dying to come up and find houses.

"Yours sincerely,
"_____."

"The Devil!" I ejaculated. "She's done me again. I'll show her that our houses aren't prehistoric, anyway."

(*To be continued.*)

# The Real Decadent

By R. A. Scott-James

"The noble type of man regards *himself* as a determiner of values; he does not require to be approved of . . . he knows that it is he himself only who confers honour on things; he is a *creator of values*." This Nietzschean half-truth has been bandied about and exploited for all it is worth; we all know the tub-thumping superman who has added ten cubits to his stature by walking on Nietzschean stilts. We have seen so many poor little shapes puffing themselves out and declaring with pitiful bombast that they were the heirs of all the ages. Nietzsche himself lost his mental balance; poor John Davidson killed himself; dozens and dozens of men are torturing themselves to-day because—the Superman is dead.

He was dead before Nietzsche lifted up his voice. Why otherwise should that philosopher have wrought himself into a frenzy to prove the godhead of men walking in the forms of gods around him? It is not till we have missed a thing that we become vividly conscious of it. It was because German society was becoming complacent and spiritually idle, because culture was turning men out as types rather than self-determined individuals, that Nietzsche clamoured for men intent upon self-expression, for men who should act, not temporise; accept life, not question it; assert and will, not consider and balance. The little disciples of Nietzsche all over the world accepted his doctrine without the essential conviction, which was more important than his doctrine. They harped upon natures aristocrats and the slave morality of idealists and Christians, forgetting that what made Nietzsche pour out the vials of his wrath upon the Christians was not the conviction of Christianity, but the spectacle of Christianity buttressed up by the arguments of doubters; that what made him execrate servile minds was the servility of the aristocratic mind; that his historic attack upon Richard

Wagner was precipitated by his horror at seeing a great man "sitting between two stools," "saying yea and nay in one breath."

It was because he saw the sham of culture set up in the place of personal conviction that Nietzsche, in a spirit of revolt and contrariness, created a monster for his ideal of man. He could not see around him those energetic, ascendant, creative minds which he idealised. He saw only the weak slaves of culture and custom, decadent in their ability to say "Yes" to life, originating nothing, subsisting upon reserves of ancient energy. The very anger and the irritation which he felt drove him into an attitude of criticism, scorn, cynicism; his determination to release himself from bondage to his own age and generation drove him to what, in any other man, would have been the very decadence he deplored, that of separating himself from vital activity, denying life—what in him was not decadence only because he found a perpetual splendid outlet for his activities by mingling with his contemporaries in the vehement embrace of war.

Englishmen have been praising Nietzsche for the very same reason that Nietzsche came to exist—because we no longer breed supermen—because the modern psychological habit has enabled us to see that the originating instinct and conviction are rare among us, and that when they appear they are greeted by the intellectuals, not with praise, but with sneers. Culture has assumed control. Compromise is the order of the day. Expediency is the rule in politics, ethics, and even philosophy. The "intellectual," prudent, and morally timorous or indifferent are conspicuous in politics, religion, morality, and art. They have inherited the aristocratic theory of "responsibility," and have applied it in the cadging spirit of fear and snobbishness. All the old accumulations of energy in the country, manifest in our great national institutions, become, in the hands of modern administrators and intellectuals, temples of worship, on the one hand, fetters to original genius, on the other—so much dead-weight against free energy, free expression of thought, against spontaneity, exuberance, life.

I am speaking not of the proletariat of this country,

but of the intellectuals and so-called "men of affairs," the people whom we have a habit of sticking on pedestals, expecting them to be very tame, reserved, and decorous when they get there; the whole class of people from whom the statues are taken—who govern us in Parliament and in the Civil Service, who preach at us in the pulpit, who teach us in the Universities, who write leading articles in the newspapers, who attend committee meetings at the Mansion House, who organise our charities, whose reputation is unimpeachable. The official note prevails. The general sense of a meeting of cultured persons of this sort is for an all-round, acceptable view, for sweet reasonableness, for compromise, above all, avoidance of excess; it is against genuine emotion; enthusiasm it abhors; candour is taboo; plain speaking is relegated to the vulgar and irresponsible. A man who gets up and tells the whole vulgar truth is regarded as a comedian or a boor. A man who speaks with passion is a man who has lost his head, who is beside himself. The only exhibition of emotion which is tolerated is that of the hustings, where etiquette permits the feigning of passion to those who solicit the suffrages of the crowd. Sir Edward Carson is conforming to the rules when he lets loose sham sentiments and simulated passions upon the men of Ulster; but if he expressed them in the House of Commons he would be killed with laughter and derision. Much of the oratory of the Nationalist members has lost its weight in the House of Commons, because so many of them have a contemptible habit of saying what they mean.

It is the modern cultural habit that grows on the mind like fungus, the habit of questioning, examining, doubting, stating the case, refusing to *conclude*. To arrive at conclusions is regarded almost as a sign of boorishness, a crudity, an ignorant partiality. The whole system of modern statecraft, in spite of Mr. Lloyd George, is designed to paralyse action, to resist men who have been eccentric and dangerous enough to come to conclusions. I am not thinking merely of the veto of the House of Lords; far more important is the temper of the House of Commons and the tyranny of the Party System. The latter not only removes legislation from the hands of the

private member and vests it in an oligarchy called the Cabinet, but also, in accordance with the new theory of the "mandate," tends to restrict legislation to questions which have been made the subject of election cries.

Whether our modern Parliament is the natural product of the English temperament, or the modern English temperament has taken the impress of the Parliamentary system, is a question I would not care to decide. But certain it is that the spirit of "balance" which is conspicuous at Westminster, the spirit of "give and take" known as "compromise" or "meeting your opponents half-way," has invaded the upper-class culture of this country. I do not suggest that it is a bad thing to agree quickly with your adversary. But supposing there are no adversaries. Supposing no one cares enough about anything to be willing to resist tooth and nail. Supposing the only inclination is to smile at excess and to be intent upon nothing but the avoidance of fuss. In the 'forties and 'fifties furious war was waged between religion and science, but now the lion and the lamb lie down tranquilly together, and all differences have been resolved by the comforting assurances of Sir Oliver Lodge. The Idealist and the Empiricist were once passionate foes, but M. Bergson has been embraced by Englishmen because he has found that the one was as right as the other. Art and utility were not on speaking terms in the days when Burne-Jones and Rossetti began to paint beautiful pictures and wicked architects laid out Bayswater. To-day art and utility are joined; we put up some tolerable public buildings and creditable advertisement posters, and the same modest standard is good enough for the Royal Academy. There was a time when Conservatives and Radicals were real antagonists. Now they are friends. Both accept the theory of democracy and solicit the confidence of the working-man. They no longer agree to differ; they differ about trifles because they are agreed about essentials; it is the policy of both to ward off drastic and revolutionary changes. A factitious enthusiasm for party takes the place of genuine enthusiasm for causes.

It is precisely among those classes to which we should naturally look for the lead in public life that a kind of weariness has become manifest. This weariness is intel-

lectualism run to seed—intellect robbed of the life-blood of the emotions. The old cries have become stale. Everyone knows to what sort of bathos the cry of "liberty" leads; we have been through the enthusiasms of "equality" and "fraternity," and found them flat and unprofitable. Truth was an ideal that philosophers and social reformers once revered; but truth has been shown up as an abstraction in the void, and the "expedient," the "practically useful," is the modern substitute. The dogmas of the Church are all very well, but even parsons look askance at the Thirty-nine Articles, and challenge the orthodox doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. The Darwinian theory of evolution is no longer contested. It has never been proved or disproved, but it is near enough for practical purposes. Enthusiasm and conviction having been exploded, and found suitable only for the vulgar, the very class which should take the lead has lost its incentive to action. The will has been atrophied. Heroism has become ludicrous, and the zealot is relegated to the rank of the impracticable fanatic.

Consider, for instance, our conduct of foreign affairs in the recent Near Eastern crisis. Certainly the danger of a general European war was not more imminent than in 1878, the year of the Treaty of Berlin, when Beaconsfield imposed his will upon Europe. But in 1912–1913 our Foreign Office was moved, not by the desire to promote British policy, or to have a policy at all, but merely by the fear of war. Our diplomatists did not consider whether war was more likely to be promoted by a policy of activity or of inactivity. They took it for granted that inactivity was safer than activity, the policy of no policy rather than the policy of Great Britain. Our Near Eastern policy during this period is marked by a series of omissions followed by a series of catastrophes. At the critical moment when the Great Powers would have welcomed the putting of strong pressure upon Turkey, Sir Edward Grey, though in a particularly favourable position for applying such pressure, did nothing. The consequence—catastrophe number one—a bloody war between the Balkan States and the Turks. Second omission, failure to back up Bulgarian claims to the conquered territory in Thrace—consequence, catastrophe number two, renewal of war

between Turkey and the Allies. Thirdly, complete surrender to Austro-Italian policy, denying western outlet to Servia and legitimate aspirations of Greece in Epirus, this surrender being honoured by the name of "keeping the peace of Europe"; consequence, catastrophe number three, war of annihilation between Bulgaria and Servia and Greece. Fourthly, no attempt whatever to induce Turkey to respect a Treaty made under British auspices—consequence, catastrophe number four, Turkey tears up the Treaty, marches on Bulgaria, and recaptures Thrace. Total effect of policy of inactivity—a year in which the peace of Europe was daily threatened by the prolonged tension, and the incidental massacre of more than half a million Turks and Christians.

Such was the policy of masterly inactivity, of intellectualism, of prudent statesmanship. But the astonishing thing was, not that Sir Edward Grey should have adopted such a policy, but that the English educated classes should have praised it. The diplomats of Austria, Italy, and Turkey—to whom everything was conceded—naturally praised him for his moderation; but that Englishmen too should have praised him for "keeping the ring," for "preserving the peace of Europe," for sacrificing no more than half a million or so of lives—that surely was symptomatic of the dry rot in our public life. There is little point in blaming the Foreign Minister. His apathetic policy was only a reflection of an apathetic public opinion. He has been as good a Foreign Minister as the country has deserved.

Or we may take the case of Ulster and the Home Rule Bill. I say nothing about Mr. Asquith's admission of the principle of compromise, for at the moment in which I am writing he seems to have no intention of sacrificing the principles of the Bill. So far he has proved himself more consistent than the rank and file on either side. But how many responsible men have been talking glibly about compromise at a time when compromise was intended to involve the dismemberment of Ireland and the exclusion of the Ulster Protestants from the benefits of the Home Rule Bill! Any impartial observer was forced to the conclusion that all that the rank and file of the Liberal party wanted was to get the Irish question out of the way,

and all that the rank and file of the Tory party wanted was to get the Liberal Government out of the way. The enthusiasm of the Tory party took the form of cheering the noisy demagogism of Sir Edward Carson; the enthusiasm of the Liberal party was not superior to any sort of compromise which Mr. Redmond could be induced to accept.

I suppose few men have had so disheartening a conclusion to a great career as the late Canon Barnet. Having given his whole life to the cause of social reform and attracted the enthusiasm of hundreds of young men to the Settlement movement in the East End, he lived to see the Settlement movement discredited and the old enthusiasm for Settlement work replaced by a kind of intellectual cynicism among those who still drifted into it, and Toynbee Hall turned into a kind of Polytechnic.

I have no wish to eulogise every stupid and hot-headed enthusiasm which draws intemperate young men into the espousal of forlorn causes. I am alluding to the fact that among the upper classes the tendency and apparent purpose of society is to strangle enthusiasm at birth. The orthodox religions do little or nothing to resist the tendency. On the contrary, the churches are mainly middle and upper class institutions, conducted on class principles, and unfriendly to originality, sincerity, and genuine conviction. It would be interesting to know exactly how many persons are regular attendants at church because they have an absorbing conviction about the teachings and practices of the Church; and exactly how many attend because they are very poor, and have been bribed by the clergy; or because they are dull, and can meet other dull people at Church functions; or because they are snobs, and dare not offend against the social propriety of Church attendance. I am very far from scoffing at religion. On the contrary, I am speaking of the hypocrisy which masquerades as religion, which is taking possession of the churches and turning worship into a social convention; I am alluding to the failure of the modern upper and middle class churches to touch the emotions of the working classes, and to the character of the upper classes amongst whom there are no vital emotions to be touched. Having but moderate intellectual, and still scantier emo-

tional, resources within themselves, the modern churches are allowing the religion of this country to lapse.

Moral laziness—that is the keynote. It results from the opposition of the intellectual classes to the most vital emotional and moral forces in the country. Intellect is festering around stagnant institutions, the fortified places in which culture entrenches itself against the spendthrift vitality of the uncultured, emotional, energetic, self-assertive, passionate crowd. Intellect cut off in cynical isolation from those vital energies is made sterile; it makes for decadence; and the emotional energy of the ignorant classes is frittered away through lack of intellectual control, and becomes spasmodic and abortive in its undirected violence. On the one hand, we have the men of culture so absorbed in the weighing of intellectual issues that all unusual effort offends their logical canons, the will becoming inadequate to any action not prescribed by routine; they are unequal to the task of creative living. On the other hand, we have the masses of men in whom the pulse of life beats rapidly and violently; the men who have suffered in the struggle for existence, many of whom are moved by divine discontent and are passionately impelled by the ideal of better conditions of living, who have faith in life, who abundantly believe in action, who have no shame in conviction, but who, in their ignorance, drift hither and thither, they know not where, the prey of every gust of popular passion. Here, up and down the community, is the faith and the will for creation; but the knowledge and training are lacking. The ascendant impulse of the crowd has often in the past resulted only in wreckage and revolution.

But it exists—this believing but impotent crowd which shouts unavailingly outside the strongholds of routine culture. It is asserting itself wherever the passion for a fuller life is denied opportunity. "Except ye have faith even as a little child, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." I heard someone shouting out the words at a meeting of workmen. The exact significance of the sentence was not weighed, but it was the animation of the speaker, flung into the tremendous word "faith," which excited applause. Looking round upon the crowd of faces I saw that the very ardour and eagerness and

fanatical passion that lit them up, the uncritical partisanship rising to frenzy under the lash of words, the crudeness which gave them such an air of resolution, the very ignorance which blinded them to the difference between one strenuous act of revolt and the millennium, belonged to their child-like and genuine faith. I have found the same ringing note of child-like faith and hope in the crude yet almost poetical writings of Giovanitti, the Italian labour leader who gleefully martyred himself for the cotton operatives of America. I never heard his speeches, but there must have been singular power in a personality which in a few weeks organised thousands of unskilled, polyglot workers at Lawrence, and led them to one of the greatest labour victories in modern history. Larkin has attempted the same thing in Dublin. His reckless and vainglorious oratory gained the trust of the workpeople—they would have given it to any man who could confidently and simultaneously shout "Action" and "Hope." But in Larkin we have seen, not the unflinching and deliberate resolve of such men as Giovanitti and Haywood, but emotionalism and rhetorical power divorced from judgment; and we have witnessed the tragic spectacle of an impassioned crowd ready to follow even *that* when it could not get inspired leadership.

Everywhere we can see around us this same ascendant belief of the crowd in the virtue of action and self-help. Observe how members of the intellectual ruling classes have smugly commented on trade unionists who have acted on impulse without waiting for orders from headquarters. I agree that bad discipline is dangerous to every cause; but observe how these critics have only noted the failure to fulfil the routine duties which *they*—the intellectuals—so well understand, and make no attempt to appreciate and reckon with the generous sympathy, the self-sacrifice, the faith, the willingness to *act* which prompted the men who downed tools in Birmingham rather than touch tainted goods, and the Welshmen who struck against orders and jeopardised their future for a futile ideal. Let us condemn them, if we are so inclined, but for heaven's sake let us admire them—we are not in much danger of imitating them.

I say, we can see everywhere around us this same

passionate desire for a more assertive, more richly emotional, ascendant life, rebelling against the decadence of lifeless routine. We can see it even in the misguided enthusiasm of the militant suffragettes, women beating their wings against the cages of a dull existence, and identifying their ideal with the right to vote. I say nothing about the most conspicuous organisers of the movement, women like Miss Christabel Pankhurst and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence—in whose deliberate campaigning methods one may see the old oligarchic devices for arousing and misleading the crowd. But the enthusiasm of the women in the rank and file of the movement has been unmistakable; it was a passion, a convulsing emotion, violent enough to make them long for martyrdom, and to welcome any and every opportunity of energy. See what a volcano of suppressed feeling was here opened. Fifty thousand women were ready to be up in arms for the sake of the ancient fraud of the vote, and to submit themselves to the insane and discreditable tactics devised by incompetent leaders. If these thousands of women were ready to martyr themselves in such a cause, what explosive, irresistible force would not be found in the women of the country if some real cause were put before them—that of a minimum wage, for instance, or the endowment of motherhood—or if they could find someone to lead them who possessed both enthusiasm and judgment?

Here, then, we have on the one side the raw material of a nation alive and eager, on the other hand the authorised brain of the nation, moving in a circle, hypnotised by its own mechanism, sterile. Every educated person knows how hard it is to escape from his own critical apparatus; to look at the spectacle of popular enthusiasm without finding his attention absorbed by the crudity and ignorance which so often accompany it. Evidently enough, it is the modern rising of the democracy, the education of the crowd, the new demands of the crowd, and the habit of studying and catering for the crowd, which have produced among the erudite a disgust for every attribute of the crowd, including even its energy and its capacity for enthusiasm. Wherever zeal, wherever energy, wherever enthusiasm or passion appear, the modern man of culture is apt to suspect a demagogue; any latent keen-

ness within himself is apt to be checked at its inception, when the horrid flabbiness of the demagogue may be thrust into competition with it. Hence the cynical frame of mind; hence the exclusive interest of the cultured in old problems which are no longer real problems; their complete failure to respond to the stimulus of the most urgent facts of modern life; the stupid smile of tolerance and superiority when the urgency of these facts is put forward by the zealot; the lack of conviction, because there is nothing left to be convinced about; the dearth of spirituality, for spirituality cannot emerge where the intellect has trampled on the emotions; the atrophy of the will; the moral paralysis. These are traits characteristic of the men who are the *personnel* of our institutions—the conventional politician, the civil servant, the barrister, the Churchman, the extension lecturer, the don, the public schoolmaster. We see brains without body, intellect without will, thought without purpose.

I call a body decadent when some one element within it is preying upon the whole; and I call a mind decadent when some one function of the soul is eating up the energy and vitality of the whole. Modern culture is breeding intellectualism whilst it is starving the emotional and moral faculties. The result is decaying tissue.

Whilst the cultivated aristocracy of the country is starved on the side of emotion and spirituality, the less cultivated is starved on the side of intellect. Here is a great reservoir of potential energy, full to overflowing—the crowds of undisciplined men and women for whom life is a matter of first-hand experience, men and women most of whom have suffered without being crushed, impulsive, hopeful, eager, full of faith—men and women ready to act, but for whom no plan of action is prescribed—people untrained, undirected, acting spasmodically, incoherent, and therefore on the whole ineffectual.

A contrast at once presents itself, that of the solitary figure who stands conspicuous in the public eye, who, whatever we may think of him, has evidently eagerness, faith, emotional force, and the impulse to action—the ascendant qualities in which the aristocracy is lacking—combined with the knowledge, the judgment, the sense of what is practically possible and expedient. I am thinking

of Mr. Lloyd George. Who, Liberal, Tory, or anyone else, does not feel that Mr. Lloyd George, in his sympathies, ambitions, desires, and convictions, is cut off by a thousand leagues from most of the Ministers to whose slow-travelling party omnibus he is chained? No one supposes that he is content with his own Insurance Act, or his Finance Acts, or with his Old Age Pensions. The measures which he has pushed through Parliament represent the most that can be extracted from a reluctant Cabinet. The main business of our Cabinet of intellectuals is to put a drag on the energies of the Chancellor. And this, which is true of a Liberal Cabinet, would be true *a fortiori* of any Unionist Cabinet which could be formed—if any man should appear in it vehement and confident enough to stand for a constructive policy.

The decadence of modern culture lies in the fact that it encourages analysis and at every point resists constructive energy. The type of mind which is turned out by the Universities and is attracted into the public service is the type of mind which is paralysed by the critical attitude and rendered sterile for the purposes of construction. The crowd and the convulsive activities of the crowd inspire the owners of such minds only with repulsion and horror, with a fear of destructive revolution, which moves them to an intellectual resistance purely negative in its results. Just such a fear moved the aristocracy of ancient Rome when they threw doles of corn at the mob of the city, and buried their heads, ostrich-fashion, in the comfortable sands of Attic culture. Before the intellectuals of Rome lay five centuries of barren culture; but they had no organised proletariat to reckon with, no possible uprising of the crowd, no popular enthusiasm ready to sweep away or assimilate the brain-culture of the wearied few. Reversion to barbarism is perhaps not the inevitable sequel to the decadence of to-day. Absorption and assimilation of the upper classes into the vital body-politic may perhaps save us from a quick and destructive revolution, or from a slow decay such as sapped the vitality of Rome.

# Foreign Politics

By the Editor

It used to be a big thing, this business of Foreign Affairs, in the good old days when Eton stood out in the public life as lustrous as the marble of the Acropolis, and England—the England of Queen Victoria and *The Times*—radiated, as it were, from the scholasticism of a headmaster. There was a fine historical continuity about it all, insular, bracing, national. It seemed of a piece with the traditions deriving from the schools, and so from birth and the aristocracy; whether we review it as far back as the Elizabethan period of Bacon and "The Catholic Dictionary," through Cromwell who gave us a Navy, to Pitt who destroyed Napoleon, to Canning and to Palmerston, and "Dizzy" with his *Forti nihil difficile*, up to the last of the great Feudal Foreign Secretaries, himself significantly a Cecil, who could not be bothered to find out on the map what territory it was the Russians were being so nasty to us about.

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All the same, the office was there, and every Englishman knew what it meant, and every foreigner too. Bag and baggage, the "Service" was a tremendous instrument. And though it is recorded that Lord Rosebery wrote to a colleague congratulating him on his refusal of the "tiresome" job of the Foreign Office, to the world generally the man who spoke from Downing Street, and was rarely to be seen in its premises, was unquestionably the central figure in world-politics, with a signature more powerful than any mace or mitre, based on the long roll of British victories from Agincourt to the "Mad Mullah," with the "touch" of Nelson to boot. Never was any power or tradition greater in history. The F.O. was just England, the tool-box, as it were, of the Sovereign; as "Boney" found it, too strong even for him, so snug and

firm it stood, protected by its tides and gales; and so it stands to-day, only that other Foreign Offices have come into the world of late, and nobody appears to care about any of them any longer.

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Not that its *panache* has been lowered, that its maps are worse than they were before the Boer war, that a diplomatic nomination is not as good a social asset as it was in the age of the victoria and the "spotted dog," but because its whole sense, atmosphere, machinery, and ancillary paraphernalia have perforce gone the way of the other traditions and associations of privilege so rudely knocked down by democracy and what is called the European scientific spirit. We are only now beginning to feel the effects of the fall of the House of Lords, which in reality was the greatest revolutionary act perpetrated in this country since John Hampden refused to pay "ship money."

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With the House of Lords there went irrevocably and automatically Eton, the "soft job," the social value of the 'Varsity education, the Bishops and *The Athenæum*, selection, and so society, all the old values of Roger de Coverley, and with them the entire solemnity and mystery of the Foreign Office. These changes had been coming about gradually, of course, for they date more accurately from the crisis of 1900, when at last we were presented with our Tudor bill. With the advent of democracy, privilege and the Foreign Office lost its Press. Most of us can remember the days when a leading article in *The Times*, a long telegram from M. de Blowitz, shook the Chanceries of Europe. To-day we are interested rather in its economics of wood-pulp. The telegraph, the telephone, have deprived diplomacy at once of its dignity and its dispatch. In a world that reads and so forms opinions, the vanity of the service has departed. Talleyrand is as unthinkable to-day as Bismarck's "little Archer"; nor shall we ever tolerate their counterparts again.

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We sit at home and learn about events, treaties, battles, conspiracies, conjunctures and conjectures as soon as do the diplomats, and not infrequently far sooner. The

*attaché*—the curled darling of yesterday—is merely another foreign gentleman who may be useful to grace our parties. His place, *auprès des dames*, has been taken by the airman. It is the journalist that the Foreign Minister or the man in power buttonholes to-day, not at all his Excellency who in all probability has only called round to ask him to make up a foursome at bridge. In a word, the age of dignity and shibboleth is no more. Like some old noser of mischief, science has come in upon us, upsetting all our ikons and penates, our doctrines and the household plant. The mob has become articulate. It is a world of light, not of leading. Its shades and shadows and chiaroscuro are no more, hence there are no longer any grand old figures, or grand old newspapers, or indeed any old people, so young we have grown, so fierce is the desiccating sun shining upon our mediocrity.

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Instead of circumstance, in the modern world, we have got sensation. In Paris in the old days, the annual Ball at the Opera was one of the sights and attractions of Europe; to-day it is a mere mob, like our own Foreign Office receptions, which a few years ago were the most distinguished annual gatherings in the country. One cannot have it both ways. Diplomacy having lost the livery of its prestige, there is no longer any need of a butler. Ask the man you meet in the train who controls the foreign policies of France, Germany, Spain, or even England, and see if he can tell you. As like as not he will reply that the Emperor runs Germany, the "Legion of Honour" France, the King or Bombita, who is the great bullfighter, Spain, and, as for England—well, everybody knows that Sir Edward Grey has taken up women's suffrage, and that Mr. Spender. . . .

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"Quite so," you may interrupt him; "while the only man who seems to count is," and it being a matter of principle with you not to mention the two most revolutionary men in England, Bernard Shaw and the other Celt, you may pass on to the reminder that thirty thousand people journeyed down to Twickenham the other day to stand about in the cold and see a game of football: that that game for a week before, and a week after, the event

was the chief subject of interest to the Anglo-Saxon world, as was the Wells-Carpentier fight before it, and that, except to smile at the pipeclay militarism of the Zabern affair in Alsace, hardly one of those thirty thousand able-bodied Britons saw anything connected with our Foreign Office in it, or with our Navy, which is its final instrument. It is a change in the subject of interest, that is all. And it is a change of immense significance.

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It means simply this, that another superstition is dying; that, as the age of Princely warfare has passed, so now the traditions of the Napoleonic-Bismarckian statecraft are, in the highest forms of civilisation, giving way to the simpler and more cosmopolitan exigencies of democratic comfort. And it is worthy of notice that at this moment, when the women of the higher civilisations are striving for a new definition, a new philosophy, and a new government, of Love, war concomitantly is falling from its estate in the eyes of men. If marriage is on its trial, so, too, is war. It is no longer quite the thing it was to die "out there" for one's country. Even kings are afraid of war to-day, because the bankers and financiers find it over-expensive. The more the women displace the mediæval canons of chivalry which have ruled the education and ideals of men since the Crusades, the more must the idea of war, of bloodshed for a cause other than that of stern national defence, tend to grow unpopular. But war, or the menace of war, is the last instance of diplomacy. And the virtue of the one is the value of the other. Let the sword lose its right, and the reason itself of diplomacy must go, as it is going. We are no longer content to leave the issues of peace and war in the direction of a few individuals trained to, and entrusted with, that end. Demanding value for our money to-day, we are growing increasingly anxious to understand, and even to control, its expenditure. We may say that the conscience of war has been widened. No king could go to war to-day for a personal insult. And as the area of wanton warfare is becoming more and more prescribed—by interest, by treaty, by sympathy, and alliance—so, for these and other reasons, military, social, and economic, victory is shedding its wings and the very glory of it has become negational.

For glory is the aura of idealism, not of Democracy, which is the expression of idea. We have but to ask ourselves who were the "winners" in the wars of the last decade: whether we, or the Boers, drew the greater substantial advantage from the struggle; whether Russia defeated Japan or Japan defeated Russia; or who has been the victor—the profiter in the old sense of booty or gain—in the Balkan campaign? It is true that Italy seized Tripoli, and France Morocco, but as these were mere predatory absorptions of what we style savage territories, they have little to do with the point, which is that wars in modern conditions prove curiously devoid of positive results. And perhaps the last great result of war—and it was also the last great Feudal achievement—was Sedan, which, if it failed to injure France seriously, in the sense of breaking her national resources or moral power, yet certainly made the German Empire: made a great military State modelled on the old Bourbon lines of the soldier-cardinals who in the days of miracles ruled and devastated Europe.

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In Bismarck's case, it was a deliberate revival—the divinity of kings, the rights of class and might and government. And as subsidiary arm, the Chancellor, anticipating the modern journalist-Peer, engaged the rising force of the Press. The revival turned out a success, though the spirits he conjured up overwhelmed him. Now they, too, are crumbling. The German Emperor, with his martial divinity, his Hohenzollern mail, his State purpose of power and Feudalism, stands in the centre of Europe, the object of menace and semi-ridicule, which has become an obsession to civilisation. Bismarck's Press has gone. Even the English Press has dropped its "foreign politics." A great silence has come into it; we hear little but of the *nugae* of the day: it is the hour of the chronicler. The diplomatist having lost his mystery, the writer on foreign affairs has lost his cue. It has become almost an impossibility in London to follow the trend of European politics. The one thing that remains, the one thing we still concern ourselves with, is the relative paper strength of Dreadnoughts, and that, characteristically enough, has become largely a question of Party politics.

Now though wars are becoming unpopular, not useful even journalistically, though the responsibility of Foreign Affairs is becoming more and more the business of the people, and the Press apparently has grown tired of it; though, as we are now aware, it is the capitalists who make wars, who finance wars, who can control wars, the anomaly remains that not only is the present condition of Europe one of perpetual crisis and panic, but that, armed like pirates in the old picture-books, Europe in the last ten years has witnessed one war after another. Instead of a guarantee of peace, interlocked international interest has proved as dangerous an arm to the community as interlocked capitalism. If we no longer care what fresh "reinsurance" the *Wilhelmstrasse* is effecting, and the Press no longer tells us about this Ambassador's machination, or that Chancellor's "entrefilet," and we have come to look upon the map of Europe rather as a question of the tonnage of guns and ships than of the human mind which deals with aims and ambitions and ventures and perpetrations, we yet have to recognise that war is as common to-day as it was when men forced damnation or salvation into humanity by fire and rack and push of pike, and that, perhaps strangest of all, with our modern Press that knows everything, nobody in modern times ever rightly understands what any war is about.

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The Crimean war, as we know, was fought on a matter of "Holy Places." But what about the Transvaal war? Why did the Russian and Japanese war break out? How many people know the truth about M. Caillaux and the Mannesmann brothers in relation to the triangular crisis which led to Algeciras; or could answer the most elementary examination paper about recent events in the Balkans or what has been their result? Not only is the sciolist ignorant; the truth is that the expert is ignorant, and has failed conspicuously on every one of the occasions referred to. We have but to recall our "Christmas plum-pudding" fiasco in Pretoria. All diplomatic and military Europe proved wrong about the Japanese war, and the very day the Russian battleships were "holed," the German Foreign Office was circulating implicit assurances that peace was assured. Out of the Balkans not a soldier, a

journalist, or a diplomatist in all Europe has come with any reputation at all. And that to-day is what happens. It was simpler when kings were expected to lose their tempers, and "grand" figureheads dictated benevolently to illiterate peoples; it was comparatively easy, too, in the times of the Ems telegram.

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But now, as nobody cares, nobody knows. Even such a vital question to this country as military provision is left in England to the blasts of chance and hugger-mugger; and we see one set of newspapers fiercely attacking the other set on such a matter as the strength of the Navy, as if there were no War Lords, no council of experts, no authority and no war brains, to speak and look after the concern. It is one of the conditions of democracy.

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The condition of all voices, and not of any one voice. The problem of naval strength has become as debatable as the vicissitudes of the barometer, the vane for every man of us to argue about. Even after the hideous revelations which attended our last military trial, we still leave the Navy to the economic squabbles of the politicians, content if the Opposition newspapers don't bother us with too many adjectives and headlines. We talk about the "scuttlers" and the "hystericals," but, being for the most part plain, "middle" men, we do not believe in either. We trust in the magic formula of our tradition. We hope the War Lords do attend to their job. And there we leave it, because we have always been accustomed so to leave it—to those who sail the ships we pay for.

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Looking at the whole question of Foreign Affairs analytically, we find certain distinct features, not a few of which are new and, from the nature of things, indeterminable. First of all, we see that wars in modern conditions break out when least expected, for no conclusive reasons, and end as inconclusively, without particular gain, that is, to the litigious parties. We find, too, that they are as common as ever, and, without all proportional return, ruinously costly. The profession of war being now highly and increasingly scientific, also the issues of campaigns depending largely on the financial resources of the com-

batants, we have to face the unpleasant but indisputable fact that as diplomacy fails in its business, so do the military experts fail in theirs, both as regards provision and execution. To-day an airman's reconnaissance, a particular gun, or powder, or invention, may be the equation of any Bazaine, or even of a Moltke. More than ever war has become a game of uncertainty, in addition to which it has become barren.

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And as the danger of war lies at the fringe of different grades of civilisations, where white meets black, or a more purposeful reason of State clashes with one less highly organised and directed, so the object of war, as its moral and material attributes decline, tends to become the more problematical. It is at once a source of strength and of danger—of strength prospectively to the whole, yet of weakness to the individual. Obviously, the greater the responsibility of war, the fuller the security of peace, which as a theory should be good enough. It might be considered, too, an additional safeguard that as the "game" has ceased to interest the public, therefore the people will see to it that it is not led by the nose for this or that dynastic, personal, capitalistic, or base interest into wars which cannot be of service to anyone. But those who think so can hardly have studied the teachings of our times. All, indeed, that the wise man can say is this.

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The responsibility of war has been shifted. In a complex age, responsibility also has become complex. A couple of financiers and a journalist could bring about a conflagration to-day as surely as any Pope could, though a king couldn't; nor, without an immense amount of preparatory work, could even a Government. At the same time, a people cannot wage war in opposition to their rulers, nor could they prevent it: not yet, at any rate. In short, all that can be said is that civilisation has come to realise that war is a vain thing, or, in other words, a luxury; and because it is a luxury, diplomacy too has become a luxury; and because it is so expensive war has become a source of fear; and because it has become so scientific, war has lost its romance; and because the people have learnt to read, war is no longer an aristocratic profession.

Thus the mystery, the romance, the virtue, the vanity, and the very objects of war have come to be questioned, even as the nations stagger under the increasing weights of armaments and the Press itself, as if conscious of the discovery, pretends to resolve the problem into paper battles of tables and statistics. But if the nobility of war has gone, the frequency and the cost of it have increased, and in reality it is only the atmosphere of it that has changed. War, the wise preparation for war, remains more than ever the care of government, as it was from the beginning. When men have learnt to think—as well as read—a new attitude towards the whole question may arise, but that time assuredly is not yet. Nor so long as any one Power in Europe continues in mediæval harness can any progress be reported. As Esquimaux dogs will run in traces together, yet tear one another to pieces when taken severally from the collar, so the Great Powers, each one taxing itself to straining-point, may from a common fear avoid the individual cataclysm. But let one of them free itself from its chains, and what sane man would answer for its security? And such is the touchstone of foreign politics.

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The danger lies to-day not in the passions, but in the polarities of civilisation. Ideas are of no use until they are accepted; now the idea of war is—war. It never had any other reason, and it never will have, unless we are visited with another deluge and man starts afresh from the Ark.

# No Critics, no Plays

"An Englishman" was lamenting recently the dearth of dramatic criticism in London; for how, he declared, can an art flourish if there is no standard to test it by; and if there is no standard, how can there be an art? Values, as we know, are curiously unstable in their incidence, fickle as fashion, or love, or human beauty, apt to depreciate like gold and silver or to grow into an utterly false inflation, as we see in the case of an old master, the demand for a particular kind of jewel, a commodity such as rubber, or any article in the market subject to the laws of demand or the fortuitous circumstance of popularity. And it is owing to this fluidity that every artist feels himself to be, and is, necessarily a critic; as, *per contra*, every critic who expresses his opinions honestly and fearlessly, in the creative sense of attitude towards his subject, must therefore, in however poor a way, himself be an artist.

A humble artist, possibly, as many a great artist is often a bad critic: in neither case does it much matter. The value of each is the proportion contributed, whether good, bad, or indifferent—take them together, and they form a value, and that even if the artist who painted the picture, wrote the play, or modelled the statue be in the opinion of the great majority right, and the critic who decried the work be fatuously and culpably wrong. For together, the creator and the traducer, they set up a standard; we have a measure by which to judge and estimate, and if the values are reversed, and it is the critic who is right—well, so much the better for the art. Alone, without values, without criticism, the artist is only too apt to flounder and go astray. Circumstance, chance, physical condition, interest, these things affect the artist as they affect the stockbroker; indeed, far more so. And as the broker watches the fluctuations of the Bank-rate, so the artist, if he is wise, turns to his abacus of the values.. The grizzly writer delves into the Bible, into Sterne, into Addison or

Swift, or he picks up Defoe, Pater, Ruskin, Shelley, Keats, Pope, Carlyle, just as a man periodically takes counsel with himself to see how he is faring. So a painter goes to the galleries, a musician to the concerts, a prize-fighter to the ring, an actor to the theatre; and this act of reburnishing and replenishing is the food of their activity, without which no man would be able to estimate his own power or that of any other.

When the blasts of criticism have been fiercest, art has flourished most. The pot-house blarney of "Ben" has left not a scratch upon the aureole of Shakespeare. And this is the office of the critic. He works by process of ingestion. He is the upholder, the sifter, the appraiser. The new thing astonishes him. Were it not so, he would not be a mere critic; he would himself be a creator, for receptivity is a precondition of genius. He begins to bellow, as is his good right. By his "blowing," he thus calls attention to the new object. Other critics follow. The artists themselves intervene, and, as natural critics, they too begin to debate, to descant, at last, it may be, to teach. So we learn and move. The index has done its work. It remains then for the creator to sanction its acceptance.

Perhaps that is, after all, the chief usefulness of art: that it teaches us to accept what is new rather than what is old, seeing that reproduction is itself nothing else than re-creation, and that as there is no finality, so there are no two things exactly alike. And looking at our modern stage, we must admit the absence of this quality, as if we are serious we must deplore it. The note is entertainment. Instead of an index, the critic has etiolated into a pamphleteerist whose business it has become to write prettily, amusingly, and evenly about the Theatre in the spirit of the entire environment, which is frankly and blatantly commercial. To abuse him for this deficiency would be foolish. He is but a conspirator with the actor and the playwright, the manager, and all connected with the stage, which has become a business neither more nor less sordid than that of floating a company. If the dramatist is controlled ultimately by the public, the critic is controlled by the Press, which, in turn, is controlled by its proprietors. The men who own newspapers, like the men who own theatres, have their weather eye upon the public's cash.

Let criticism become conditional, and the index obviously depreciates, as with the public realisation of its inefficiency the personality of the critic grows vain and nugatory. As is his case to-day. The critic is of no account; because, in the first place, the theatrical trade does not desire him to matter, and, in sympathetic conjunction, the newspaper proprietors no longer permit him to attempt to. With the loss of the personal equation, the purpose of his office vanishes. To-day the man is nobody; it is the newspaper in which he writes that sets the value, reckoned according to the circulation of the particular newspaper. But as the man has forfeited his entity, so he, too, falls the victim to the machine. He "cuts up" a play, and no one considers who he is, what are his qualifications; that, after all, he is human and so frail, and that what he has said is but a personal opinion, but solely the damning verdict published in a newspaper whose certified daily circulation exceeds half a million, and as such is accepted as "revelation."

Such, however, is the position. The critic can no longer criticise, because what he has to consider is his newspaper's circulation, and the newspaper has to consider it too. No man can forfeit his soul in the arts. Thus practically the only fresh, fearless, intelligent dramatic criticism in London to-day must be looked for in the submerged newspapers, daily and weekly, which by reason of their comparatively small circulation—no matter how able the writers may be—neither touch the public nor the box-office. It is a dismal, sordid condition, but there it is; and because it exists, the dramatic art has sunk to the wilderness of the present vulgar and silly entertainment business, which, only too often, is not even commercial.

And the stage is growing worse. The Press having demoralised the public, it is for the Press to redress the balance. But this it will never do until criticism is restored to its own, or the public itself grows so bored with the values of the big circulation tyranny that it calls again for the man.

S. O.

# Books

## ECONOMIC

MEN AND RAILS. By ROWLAND KENNEY. T. Fisher Unwin. 6*s.* net.

This is a new departure in the way of literature on railway problems. We have had the case stated for and against railway nationalisation many times, and we have had the financial and economic aspects of railway working treated time and again by experts in those branches of the subject—we have had, in short, hundreds of treatises on "rails," but until the publication of Mr. Kenney's book we had none on "men." And one was badly needed. Hours, Wages, Accidents, the Board of Trade, Strikes, and Conciliation are dealt with, but the most interesting section of the book—and terrible as it is interesting—is that dealing with railway risks to employees. For their laxity in providing and enforcing safeguards, the Government and the Board of Trade are vigorously attacked. "Year after year and generation after generation Parliament has permitted railway companies to exact a ghastly toll of killed and injured workmen instead of enforcing the simple safeguards which the exigencies of railway work demand. And it has done this willingly or wilfully, for each individual member of Parliament has received periodical reports of the terrible conditions prevalent—reports which positively shrieked for that attention which they never received." Mr. Kenney does not devote much space to his own personal experiences, but what those experiences were may be gathered from the following short extract: "I have worked a capstan (a dangerous piece of stationary machinery used in yard shunting) on a most dangerous crossing, part of the time in a blinding snowstorm, from six o'clock on Friday morning to two o'clock on Saturday afternoon, without a break except for meals. I was then getting 19*s.* for a week's work of seventy-two hours, and overtime paid for at ordinary time rates." He concludes with a demand for railway nationalisation, but adds another demand, that the employees shall have a large share in the control of the industry when it has been acquired by the State. *Men and Rails* is a most informative book, and as interesting as it is informative.

## ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE

HENRY JAMES. By FORD MADOX HUEFFER. Martin Secker. *7s. 6d.* net.

It is a difficult task for an honest man to write about a contemporary, and perhaps it is as well that Mr. Hueffer, apparently realising this from the outset, begins his book with the whole-hearted confession that he regards Mr. James as the "greatest of living writers and, in consequence, for me the greatest of living men." Later on he relates how he himself "lifted" one of Mr. James's characters bodily into one of his own works, so clearly the character fixed itself in his mind, which is the sort of thing, we know, does happen with *les beaux esprits*; still, as "you cannot write about Euripides and ignore Athens," which is Mr. Hueffer's way to explain that he cannot write about Mr. James without writing about himself, so neither can a fellow write about Mr. Hueffer without—well, without saying that the egotism is personal, amusing, and suggestive enough to justify a few words of like indiscretion.

Mr. James—bother Mr. James! (he is the greatest of living writers)—Mr. Hueffer, then, is determined this time to puncture our susceptibilities. He tells us that he never could read Byron. In a fine period, he informs us that the schools of Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Reade, Dumas, and George Eliot are "botched and amateurish productions"; that *The Yellow Book* represented the high-water mark of "English achievement in the world of the arts," and that nothing that came before it was worth much attention, with the possible exception of Mr. Henley's *National Observer*, though he admits that a man may, "without serious diminution of self-respect," read Galsworthy, Arnold Bennett, Wells, and George Gissing, even Stevenson and George Meredith—all of which goes to show that Mr. Hueffer is the victim of the same grievous faults he attributes (and with certain right) to the Pre-Jamesian artists who had not yet learnt the lessons of the *Deluge*, or, in other words, had not acquired the technique of Turgenief, from whom Mr. James and the Hueffer-Bennett art derived.

In sum, Mr. Hueffer belongs to a school. *Ex cathedra*, talking to the boys, he would be delightful and most nationally useful. Such is his rightful place. What is good in a teacher is not always good in a writer, and when Mr. Hueffer lets fly in a tangent it is well to be near the

salt-cellar. Take that pontification of his about *The Yellow Book*, for example. With the exception of Mr. James and one delightful satirical essay by "Max," what stands out in that movement to-day is the pre-eminence of the pencil artists over the writers, even when, in secondary instance, they took to the inkpot, as in the case of Aubrey Beardsley. In a schoolmaster it is admirable to grow so enthusiastic about technique. We may grant Mr. Hueffer that Dickens had a poor technique, yet not worse than Shakespeare or Byron, and what in the end—in the end—does it matter? We can see that Balzac "placed" his characters instead of revealing them, but—*Du liebe Zeit!*—does that matter either now?

And Henley, with his prosy, derivative, journalistic "Captain of my Soul"—one of the poorest paraphrases of Shakespearean poetry ever hacked out in Fleet Street—can he, with his "form," be set at the feet of Byron, who never cared a d——n, or of Cervantes, who painted mere types, or of old Fagin, or Pecksniff, or Mrs. Jellaby? Why, it looks as if Mr. Hueffer himself was becoming anachronistic—Mr. Arnold Bennett has already seceded (see THE ENGLISH REVIEW, June, 1913)—and, in sport, it is commonplace that for years England has been suffering from this sickness of style in lieu of efficiency, as any member of the Rugby Selection Committee would admit without parley. Again, Futurism is style, but Hamlet's Ghost is immortal, even if we do feel we would like to offer the Prince a dose of "Easton's Syrup" to help rid him of his morbidities. And when at last Mr. Hueffer comes to the technique, which is his speciality and Mr. James's supremacy, he just boggles at us with a touch of humour too heavy even to be Hanoverian. There is nothing to be said. Mr. James has done it all for us: "There is nothing left for the poor critic but the merest of quotations"; and so, with quotations and an appendix, the book closes.

Mr. Hueffer irritates when he tries to be smart, and makes fatuous remarks about Duchesses (*vide* page 126); writes *Genf*, meaning Geneva; then his generalisations about people who are not artists are rather cheap "footling," irrelevant in a book on Mr. James, to whom such subjects stood, with their thousand or so a year, as models; for if these folk are not worth intelligent consideration (and Mr. Hueffer tells us so), then it must be unintelligent to write about them, as Mr. James did, to Mr. Hueffer's unbounded, if illogical, admiration. We

Anglo-Saxons (Mr. Hueffer says) cannot call a spade a spade, neither can we be logical. Perhaps that is why Mr. Hueffer takes the trouble to inform us that he has become a Papist. *Pas malin, celui-là, bigre!* As an upholder of the feudal system, his philosophy must perforce be mediæval. But that again, on his own showing, does not matter. It is a point of view, at any rate, an atmosphere, and that Mr. Hueffer, in this suggestive and provocative compilation, has certainly succeeded in establishing: also he writes English beautifully.

WOMAN, MARRIAGE, AND MOTHERHOOD. By ELIZABETH SLOAN CHESSER, M.B. Cassell and Co., Ltd.

Yet another book on the woman's question, a sober, dignified exposition of views and tendencies which, if it does not reveal anything new—and it expounds nothing that has not been stated in far greater breadth and detail by men, German, English, and American—puts out the case for the new attitude towards the sex and its problems, which is the virtue of the "movement." On the other hand, it is matter for serious regret that the author, who is a doctor, should associate herself with the White Slave agitation—writing (as she does) as if all the stories spread about it were true, whereas they are unsubstantiated; nor is her chapter on the "social evil" more than a repetition of other works. In the main, however, it is a work written with honesty and conscientiousness, though when at the end one reads the words, "We are only beginning to understand what love is," folk who are not "dead sick" of the whole talk about sex may be excused if they then become so. Such words are stupid and bad. What the author means is that in modern conditions of civilisation the old Biblical ideas and laws of marriage are in need of enlightened reform—which they certainly are in not a few respects, perhaps the chief of which is the utterly immoral legislation concerning the bastard children.

## HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

LADY HESTER LUCY STANHOPE: A NEW LIGHT ON HER LIFE AND LOVE AFFAIRS. By FRANK HAMEL. Cassell. 15*s*.

Mr. Hamel has given us a good insight into the doings of Lady Hester, that elaborate fraud; he has discovered fresh materials, and, we think, will cause many readers to revise their opinions as to the intentions of Dr. Meryon,

who came in for some severe blame on the publication of his *Memoirs* and *Travels*. A strange career, in truth, this of an aristocratic Englishwoman, who deliberately shrouded herself in the dark seclusion of Orientalism! Doubtless she revelled in the sensation which her life and doings were creating throughout Western Europe. Nowadays we understand her type of female better than did her contemporaries. Humbug was the basic element of this prophetess; but in escaping from the wearying conventionalities and hypocrisies of her own country she acted on thoroughly sound principles. Many cultured women since her day have shown the same elective affinity for wilder conditions of life; and this book of Mr. Hamel's, admirably written and illustrated, may well tempt a further band to forsake Western ideals for the rough joys of the desert and the companionship of a more uncompromising race of men. The worst of it is that the class of women whom we could spare most easily are those who refuse to be tempted by allurements further afield than the milliners' shops in Oxford Street.

PILLARS OF SOCIETY. By A. G. GARDINER. James Nisbet and Co. 7*s*. 6*d*. net.

These forty character-sketches are among the best things of their kind. Mr. Gardiner writes with insight and sprightly candour; there is no hitting below the belt, no covert innuendo or half-concealed praise. It has been a difficult task to deal with men and women, prominent and alive, in this searching but yet benevolent fashion; contemporaneous biography is full of pitfalls for the unwary. The author, of course, has his own political opinions, and not the least interesting of these sketches are those devoted to types like Sir Frederick Banbury. This is a curious study, pathetic in its truthfulness, of a champion of lost causes; it proves Mr. Gardiner to be much more than what is commonly called a journalist—a real student of humanity, that is; one who has cultivated the philosophic outlook upon life. Altogether, reading this volume, one realises for the hundredth time how far superior is much of the stuff printed in the daily Press to what is gravely sent us by the circulating libraries as "literature."

## FICTION

CHANCE. By JOSEPH CONRAD. Methuen. 6*s*.

Little is to be gained by summarising the tragic and moving story which is developed in these pages. For the

intertwining of the lives here presented has the subtle inconsequence and unexpectedness of actual existence. But of all the figures, two, in particular, stand out—Flora de Barral, "the damsel," and Captain Roderick Anthony, "the knight." She is the daughter of a fraudulent financier, whose collapse has plunged her at one step from riches to poverty; he is the master of the "Ferndale," and brother of Flora de Barral's friend, Mrs. Fyne. The first half of the book is the history of Flora de Barral's youth, lonely in its wealth and miserable in its poverty, the history of a pure nature stunted and warped by misunderstanding and cruelty; the second half of the book is the history of her marriage to Captain Anthony and of her life on the "Ferndale," a history full of sombre misunderstanding, of passionate revolt, and of blind self-repression.

Conrad's extraordinary powers of delicate, precise, and imaginative psychology have gone to the creation of these two figures—the girl pathetic in her childish pride and vindictive disbelief in the world; the man touching alike in his stillness and in the fiery vehemence of his pity. And to these two characters must be added some of Conrad's rarest creations—Mr. and Mrs. Fyne (most respectable people), Franklin and Powell (the other officers of the "Ferndale"), old Marlow (once again), and so on.

*Chance* is a novel conceived in Conrad's latest manner. Its surface is of an even and perfect texture, and the whole book is in the absolute proportion of a work of art. To the high and original power of Conrad's early achievement has been added a gift of subdued irony, a concentration of style, that sort of impersonal touch which comes with maturity. The atmosphere of a book like *Chance* is truly romantic, but the romance is, as it were, less physical than in a book like *Lord Jim*. Constantly, in his later books, Conrad is less concerned with the external world and more concerned with "the secret of hearts." In all of them he is equally intent on creating an atmosphere (with Conrad that is the invariable background to the reality of his characters), but in the later books the atmosphere is less detached from the figures themselves. For fidelity to an idea is the mainspring of Conrad's art. He imagines a definite situation, a definite group of people, and his aim is to make them as apparent to his readers as they are to himself. Even more than Flaubert he is the classic example of the romantic realist, for he has not Flaubert's

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To speak of a very different point, some complaint should be made of the way in which *Chance* is presented to the public. The paper is very bad, the type too small and huddled, and the whole appearance is lacking in true dignity. Moreover, why should a publisher spoil a book by making it an advertisement for his other books by unsightly lists? A work such as *Chance* deserves better treatment.

OLD MOLE. By GILBERT CANNAN. Martin Secker. 6*s.* net.

One likes Mr. Cannan's way of writing—his sincerity, his lively touches, his cheerful indignation. He is a sub-acid student of humanity who regards without blinking the somewhat absurd crowd of puppets that dance around him. As a study, as a personal document, we have found *Old Mole* most interesting; full of good Cannanisms. But as a novel in the accepted sense of the word it is a failure. There is not sufficient motivated development of character. Things simply happen, in an inchoate and irresponsible fashion.

Old Mole himself is what the Germans would call a "Gummimensch"—an indiarubber toy, taking on any shape or impress which it may please the author to give him. Or, to vary the simile, he is a peg whereon to hang certain theories of life, certain autobiographical reminiscences and descriptions of society and of theatrical circles which have been floating about in Mr. Cannan's brain, and which he has now successfully disposed of by glueing them on to the central figure of this book and his associates. We are not surprised at any of the adventures of this

protean schoolmaster; all the incidents of his career are accretions from without; from cover to cover, hardly any attempt is made at connection between cause and effect in his mental processes. If Old Mole did not swim across the Pacific in order to marry the daughter of Prester John, it is only because Mr. Cannan, at this particular moment, has nothing of interest to tell us about the art of natation and the life-history of that obscure potentate. We feel perfectly convinced that his hero would have made a capital Prime Minister, a high-priced bricklayer, or a fervent country clergyman.

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The book is wrong, yet wrong in a suggestive and (contrasted with the ordinary fiction of to-day) positively exhilarating way. We like it, despite its wrongness; despite the fact that in its composition Mr. Cannan has managed to sit down between two chairs. For Old Mole is disharmonious and invertebrate. Why? Because he contains only certain incongruous elements of his creator's personality. He is not an individual; you can divide him into fifty separate morsels, each of them representative of some peculiar aspect of Mr. Cannan's mind. For the construction of a homogeneous character, fifty morsels are either not enough, or too much. In other words, to produce a successful figure, we want more of the writer, or less.

Such as he is, therefore, the preposterous old boy (*not* Mr. Cannan) would hardly be worth talking about were it not for the flashes of the author's philosophy which shine through his gelatinous structure. Mr. Cannan takes his art seriously; more than that, he has his feet on earth, where they should be; he is veracious, and bent upon telling us something that is worth telling. In *Old Mole* he seems to be feeling his way towards some high achievement. The appendix is remarkable for its mellow wisdom; rather an outrage, at the same time; it takes the ass-reader by the ears, as it were, and crams down his gullet a bundle of Mr. Cannan's particular brand of hay. Excellent hay, no doubt; first-class fodder; so nourishing that one would wonder how a jellyfish like Old Mole ever came to appreciate its virtues, were it not that, by the time this point is reached, one's wondering faculties have already been charmed to sleep.

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